



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

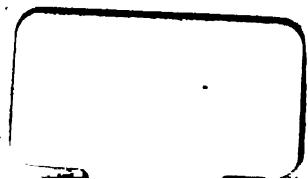
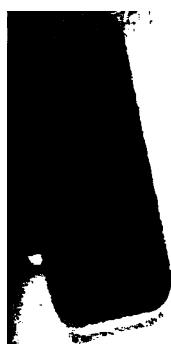
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

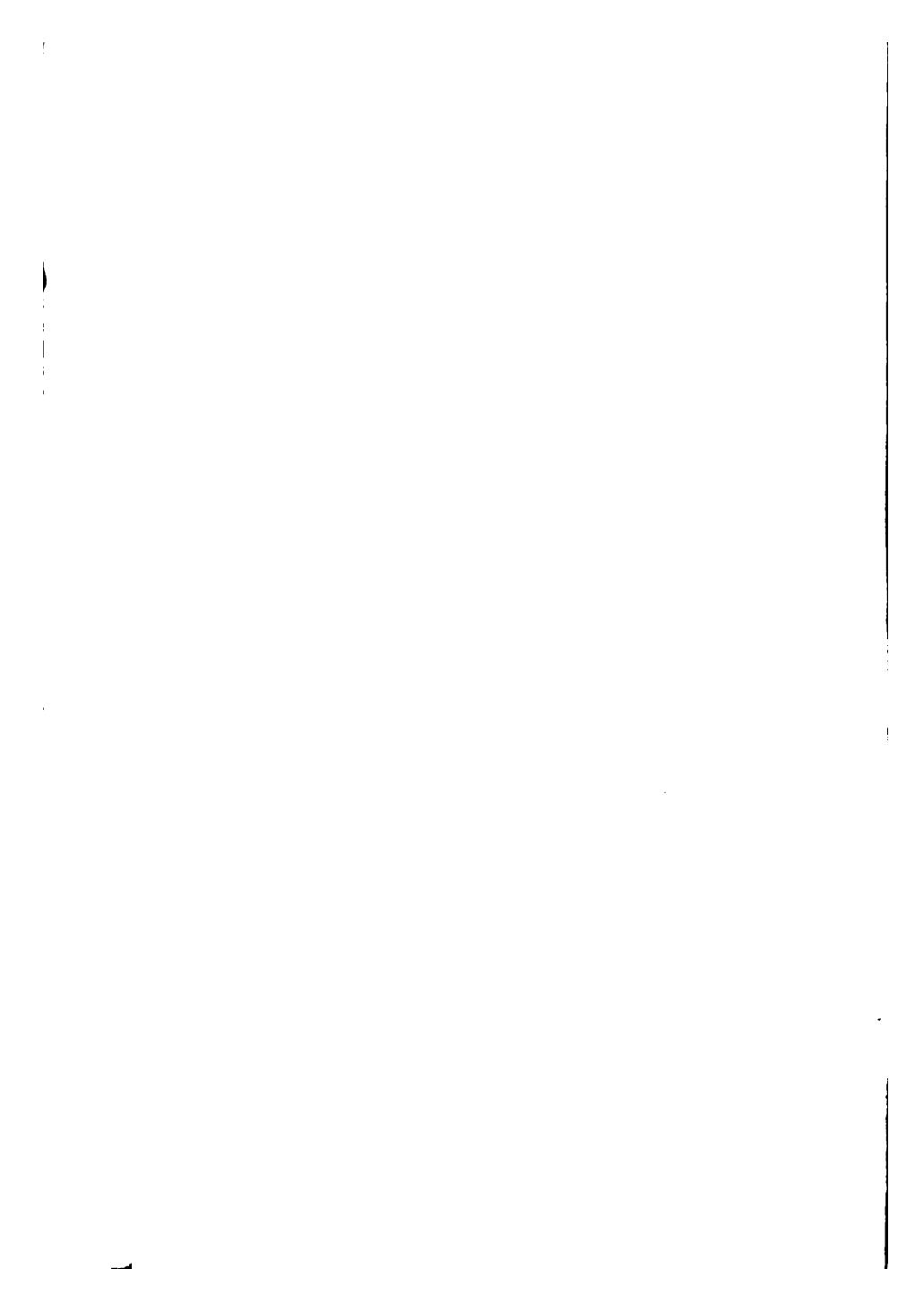
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



# **SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA**



# SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

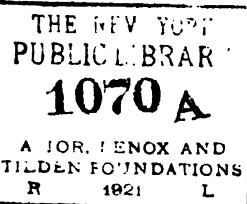
WHOLE CLOTH AND PATCHES

1

BY  
JOHN VARNEY

NICHOLAS L. BROWN  
NEW YORK

MCMXX



COPYRIGHT, 1990

BY

NICHOLAS L. BROWN

WILLIAM  
J. BROWN  
1990

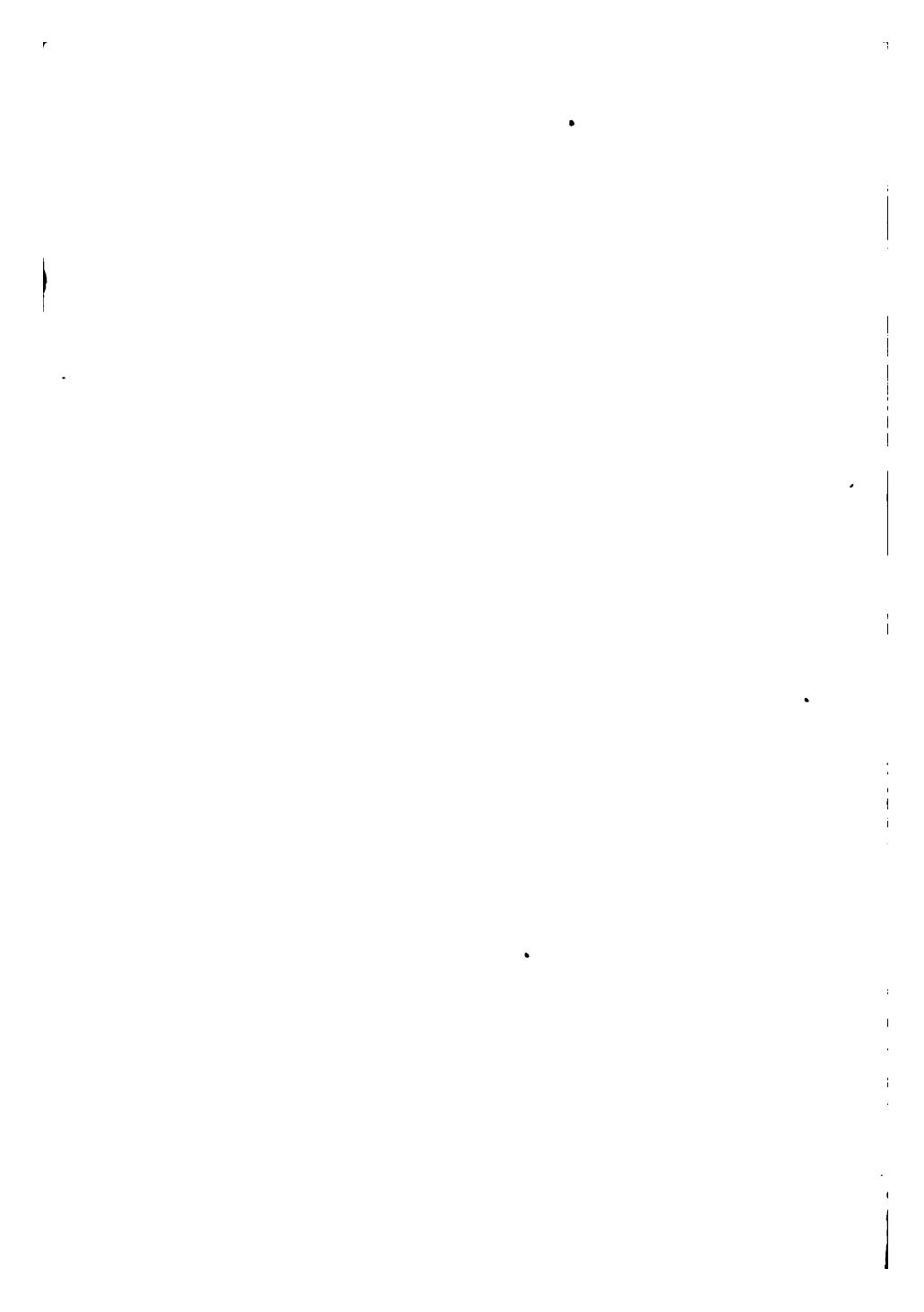
*All Rights Reserved*

## TO RANDOLPH BOURNE

Brave American,  
Lover of our country!  
Throbbing with its best and developed traditions of  
liberty;  
Carrying liberty's torch to the innermost recesses of the  
caverns of selfhood,  
And discovering in advance of thy kinsmen  
The secrets of the free society of the future;  
We salute thee now!

You saw with quick and bated emotion  
The faint light of the first beacon signal  
For a new fight for freedom — for freedom too pure to  
bear adjective dilutions —  
On that hill far away,  
Where thy frail body could hardly carry thee,  
But where thy mind and all thy quick pure spirit rushed  
to be;  
In the land of hope and regeneration —  
Russia, the despised; hated for its youth  
By all the old tyrants, Things-as-They-Are;  
As, in a measure — calling thee small and un-  
American —  
They hated and hounded thee —  
Even to thy Death!

13+. 210.120



## CONTENTS

### PART ONE: PATCHES

**INTRODUCTORY, 11**

**STERILITY, 17**

**ENTERING A NEW RUSSIA, 25**

**KAZAN: SUMMER OF 1918, 36**

**WOOD FLAME:**

An Imaginary Story of the Volga River, 43

**COUNTER-REVOLUTION, 68**

**SMASHING THE LINES:**

An Account, Largely Imaginary, of Bi-organization Activity, 85

**SUNLESS KOLA, 101**

**JOHN BULL IN NORTH RUSSIA, 119**

**WHAT THE ALLIES ACCOMPLISHED IN NORTH RUSSIA, 126**

**HONEY LOU:**

An Imaginary Adventure Among the Lapps, 138

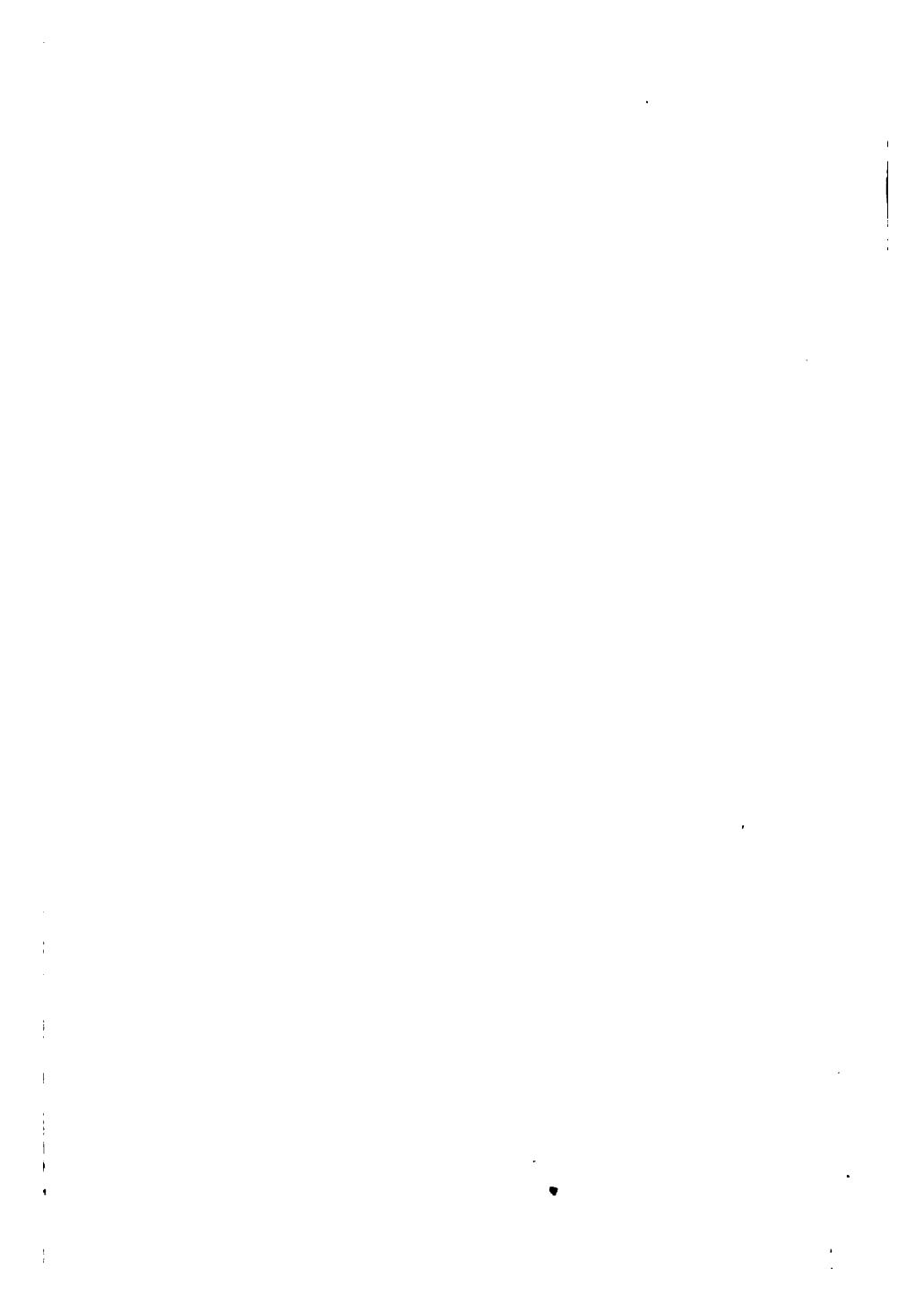
**RUSSIAN NEW-MINDEDNESS, 152**

**TAVARISH: A POEM, 165**

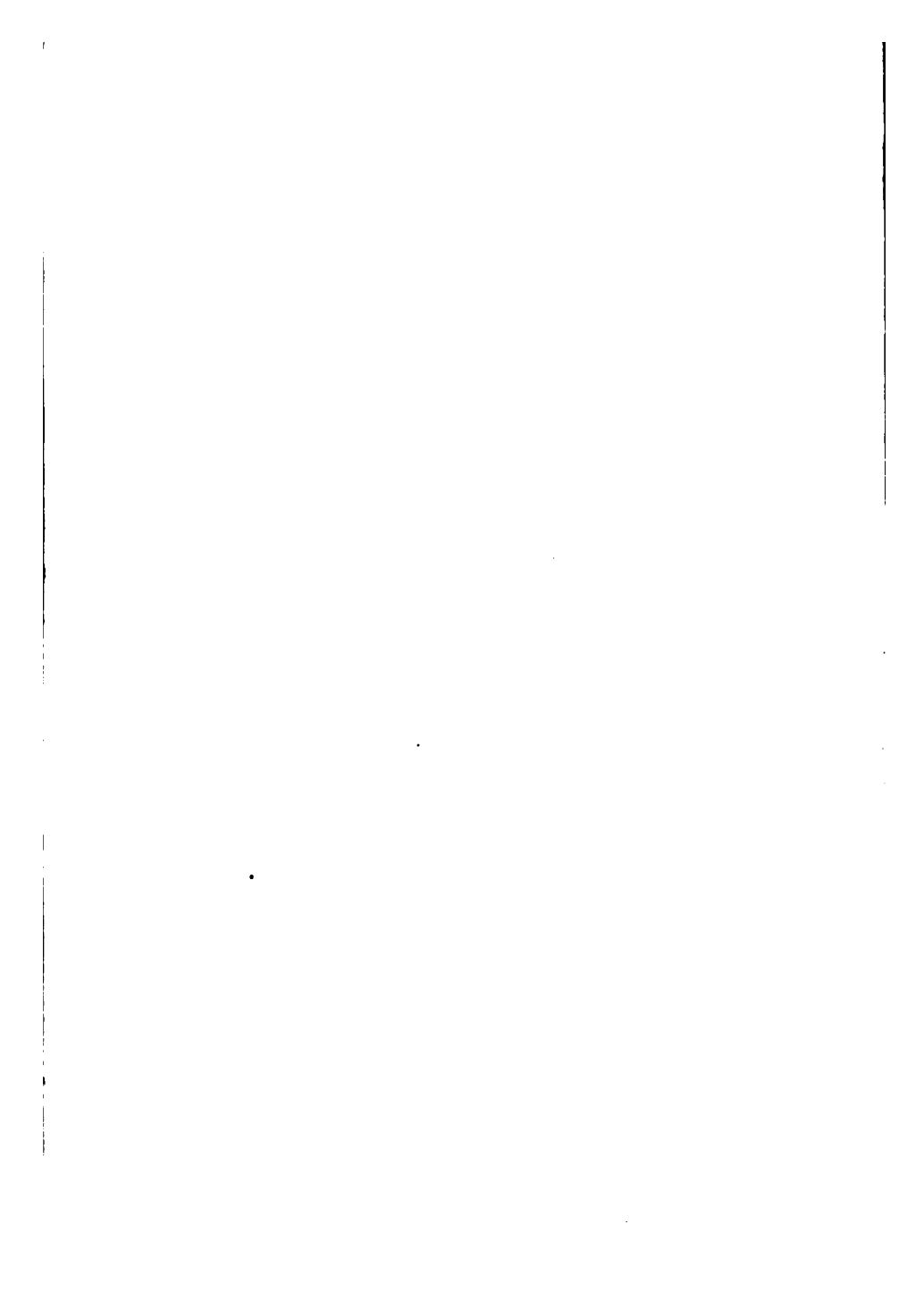
### PART TWO: WHOLE CLOTH

**WHOLE CLOTH:**

A Dialogue on Political Realism, 171



## **INTRODUCTORY**



## INTRODUCTORY

In this book are collected stray writings based upon experiences of the author in Russia from April, 1918, to March, 1919. Experiences of a common American in very ordinary service with the Y. M. C. A.; Russia, however, being what she was at that time, they were uncommon experiences.

If no central thread appears at first in these narratives, the incompleteness and inchoateness of the phenomena observed by the author must be the excuse. Although he cannot dogmatize about Russia, he can suggest; and so far as the suggestive and impressionistic method is of value, definite images and ideas may emerge for the reader from the writer's piece-meal sketches, when taken together.

The dialogue, *Whole Cloth*, was written in its first draft and with most of its array of ideas, in Sweden and Norway during September and October, 1918, before the armistice, when the writer was traveling from Soviet parts into anti-Soviet parts of Russia. This fact accounts for a certain war-time flavor in it. The short pieces, or patches, have been written at different periods from the time the writer first arrived in Russia to the present day.

While the dialogue and three of the short sketches, *Wood Flame*, *Smashing the Lines*, and *Honey Lou*, are based upon actual experiences, their characters

## 12 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

are imaginary and do not express, specifically, the ideas of the writer or of other persons.

The title, *Sketches of Soviet Russia*, may seem non-inclusive to those who believe that the anti-Soviet governments of Murmansk and Archangel were a serious menace to the propagation and development of the Soviet principle in Russia. The writer believes that the unfortunate intervention of the Allies in North Russia only helped the Soviet principle to grow to harvest time; that the governments they set up were just anti-Soviet; negative, colorless, unprincipled — only a phase of the constructive, active force of Sovietism.

Since the various sketches of this book are in the nature of excerpts from a literary diary, it may not be out of place for the author to explain so much of himself as will account for the war-time prejudices with which he entered upon his days in Russia. Accordingly, a review of the writer's American diary for the few months preceding his departure for Russia is given in a few pages immediately following.

In a special margined wide column of the *Boston Herald* of April 3, 1917, I read President Wilson's Call to War with Germany. The crisp, moral-heavy passages dug deep into my feelings. I had been pretty strong against this war on an instinct. But that trenchant morning I discovered I was no Pacifist. Wilson said something within that wide margin about America and Americans that touched explosive matter way down. I finally became moved to a point almost to enlist that very morning. Law

School was just a library of decisions for dead men on dead causes; War — of that wide-margined sort — was law-giving of the Mosaic sort, being brought down from God Himself! So deep consciousness of country, hymn-emotion, and Mosaic Wilson had their spell over me. My friends and fellow students at law school fell under a similar spell, I suppose — but whether it was just such a spell, I cannot be positive — and their instinct led them to enlist at once, that is, to go at once to a training camp for officers. As that day wore on, my own old informing instinct prevailed: I did not enlist.

On the day war was declared, Professor Wam-baugh at the end of his lecture referred with tears in his eyes to Lincoln's call for volunteers in '61. I conceded the professor's right to draw the analogy, and I conceded that, in falling subject to the spell of his warm words, the students paid a tribute to those noble strains in all of us, way down, that can always be appealed to on occasion; but, as for myself, I remained outside the range of the spell; the sudden abatement of that first rise of the war fever in me after impact with Wilson's fine words, left me for month after month uninjected by the war enthusiasm of my fellow Americans about me.

That swift judgment on the library of decisions for dead men on dead causes, once pronounced, remained binding; and it was difficult to retain enough interest in law lectures to insure the passing of the June examinations. The problems of the war and of patriotism, taking daily new angles, puzzled my

## 14 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

mind probably more in Cambridge than they would have done had I gone to a camp — done something. But why dodge the intellectual problems of the war? They would have to be faced sometime, if I was to keep respect for my own mind. The obstinacy of my mind, however, did not lead me out on any bright and shining clear path; it did not lead me to any field of martyrdom. To evade the draft law in any fashion, never seriously entered my head. The position of the conscientious objector against all war seemed as unreal as the position of the mass of the people toward this war to end war. Neither was the growth of my dissenting opinions about the war accompanied by the zest of reality; the pragmatic value of these opinions was doubtful; they were like unstated faiths — faiths too new to have any language by which they could pass current among the believers of them; they could not be propagated; the officers of government needed to have no fear that war-faiths in such a crude state of development as mine were, could be preached.

For us who were such isolated believers, set adrift in an uncharted sea, one spokesman, Randolph Bourne, was then writing, straight out with a conviction of right and of correct patriotism, in the *Seven Arts Magazine* of blessed memory. Soon this magazine had to disappear; it was the last light to go out — leaving darkness to reign — except for the phosphorescent *New Republic*.

With the progress of darkness here, was contrasted the progress of light on another shore — in

Russia. Adrift on the uncharted sea—I was driven by strong instinct to the light. The only ship I could find to carry me thither was one sent by the Y. M. C. A. I may be thought a hypocrite to have sailed under Y. M. C. A. colors, but certainly I was less a hypocrite to go to Russia for the Y. M. C. A. than to go to France for the Y. M. C. A. I was still less a hypocrite than to have waited in America in my slough of despair until in the course of events conscripted for a clerkship in Washington; that would have been a sort of martyrdom!

The banners of the Proletariat had just been raised in Russia. What did that mean? In thinking about what that might mean, zest once more took up her residence in my mind; Russia might bring me into reality again. Whether it did or not, you, reader, must judge from the assorted interpretations of Russia in the following pages. At least from this preface you will learn the state of mind of the author when he left America to go there. As further evidence of his state of mind, as illustration of a documentary sort, he appends the major part of an article, entitled "Sterility," written by him in September, 1917.

In a note to the heads of all belligerent peoples, on August 1, 1917, the Pope made several concrete suggestions for peace: The simultaneous and reciprocal diminution of armaments; the recognition of the true liberty and community of the seas; the settlement of territorial questions by all parties in a conciliatory spirit. On August 27th, President Wilson re-

## 16 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

plying to the Pope's note declared that any parley with the ambitious and intriguing rulers of Germany could lead to no peace based on the faith of all the peoples involved. There was included a statement that "punitive damages, the dismemberment of empires, the establishment of selfish and exclusive economic leagues, we deem inexpedient." And curiously it was argued that to follow the Pope's plan would, by strengthening the German Government, result in abandoning new-born Russia to certain counter revolution.

This little article "Sterility," with the President's reply to the Pope as a text, sets forth some of the observations of the author on the complexion of American war-thought of a given week. The article betrays the formation of vaguely-felt, yet confident, heterodox opinion. It is printed so that it may conveniently be skipped by the orthodox and by those impatient with groping, tentative opinion.

July, 1920.

## STERILITY

The President's reply to the Pope's peace note is a ringing, definite utterance. With the crashing of war thunder and the flashing of merciful lightning a Jove speaks. One man among the welter of an apparently individual-less world-mob, Mr. Wilson, has seen the light. Moses has come down out of Sinai. To judgment in the court of the nations, at last has come a Daniel. The Central Powers are declared the guilty party. The Allies shall have their pound of flesh. But, of course, they will be generous. France will not take Alsace-Lorraine, Italy will not take the half-Italian cities on the Adriatic, England will give up her two-power naval standard and accept Germany as an equal. But that the Central Empires will not be dismembered is only by grace of a mercy that tempers judgment. The Allies must nominally have the pound of flesh. That is the law. That is right. That is just.

To the President the question of innocence and of guilt is of colossal simplicity; to certain other Americans it has seemed, and still seems, infinitely complex. To the President the issue is moral; to these other Americans there is no grand issue; rather we witness, it appears to them, the pitting of great non-individual, evolutionary forces over against one another. The moralist, dealing with absolutes, finds his intelligence sufficient for the day. The evolutionist expects intelligence in dealing with the present events to be sufficient only in the studies of the best historical minds of the years to come.

The note harks back to the first principles of statements made by the Allied governments at the time, considerably less than a year ago, when Wilson requested

## 18 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

the peace terms of all belligerents. The French said that Wilson in making that request was a foolish idealist. English comment was: "What can America have to say when the issues have been so clearly defined by the various Premiers of the Entente Powers?" Mr. Wilson had called the attention of the warring statesmen to the fact that on each side they professed the same objects: desired to make secure the rights of weak states and to provide against the recurrence of wars like the present one. The irritation of the Allies — namely the irritation of London and Paris — at this, had its vent in the formal reply by the Entente, which intimated that Wilson had made an assimilation between the two groups of belligerents; "this assimilation, based upon public declarations by the Central Powers, is," the formal reply read, "in direct opposition to the evidence, both as regards responsibility for the past, and as concerns guarantees for the future." The Entente was in this way acting as judge of the evidence in its own case. In the reply to the Pope, the President brushes aside the question of evidence, altogether. The wickedness of the Central Powers is held to be self-evident. So nations in the past have always judged the evidence of national culpability. All is fair in war, so they have said. Then why is there in this war an attempt of each party to make out a case for itself? Because the pressure of the present cataclysm is forcing the thinking men of every nation to utter something, even though that something partakes, in its general tenor, of the nature of the old irrationalities. The utterance of the President does so partake, we fear.

The *New York Times* reports, as reported, that there are "circles of opinion abroad in which the President is regarded as more firmly set on the continuance of the war than any other national leader, in consequence of his reply to the Pope." Certainly his words must greatly please the imperialistic sections of the Entente.

The *Manchester Guardian* and what may be termed the right wing of English Radicals, seem greatly pleased with that part of the Wilson document dealing with "punitive damages"; "dismemberment of empires"; "establishment of selfish and exclusive economic leagues." While, then, the imperialists applaud the document because they shrewdly estimate that the effect of such a peace-technique is to prolong the war till the knock-out blow, the English liberals applaud the splendid paragraph of ideals. This paragraph links this last note to the earlier Wilson notes.

The boldness of the Presidential Bull against exclusive economic leagues is a stroke. It is the progressive part of this particular Wilson document and future reference may for this reason set it apart from the other papers.

When the President last December (1916) asked the belligerents to state their terms of peace, his note had a queer dash — something like innuendo. He spoke of us as a neutral nation "whose interests have been most seriously affected by the war and whose concern for its conclusion arises out of a manifest necessity to determine how best to safeguard those interests if the war is to continue." Mr. Lansing, the President's Secretary of State, issued the following statement the next day: "We are drawing nearer the verge of war and therefore are entitled to know what each belligerent seeks, in order that we may regulate our conduct in the future." This interpretation of the President's ambiguity didn't quite reflect the executive mind and was, therefore, the same day amended. The final presidential pronouncement was that we were not contemplating war. Probably we were not. The "we" as expressed in the national election, one month previous, certainly was not contemplating war.

So now, again, on occasion of the reply to the Pope, one in authority, as the Associated Press puts it, has broken the force of the President's words regarding

## 20 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

exclusive economic leagues. The President was not referring thus to the Paris Inter-Allied Economic Conference, but to aggressive economic leagues that would be made necessary if the Pope's plan were acted upon. In commenting upon this part of the paper the Paris papers reached harmony with Mr. Wilson by contending that the economic league proposed by the Paris conference was for defense only.

So the merry game of logomachy in our thinking and of reality in our warfare continues. We grow not more powerful but more powerless, it seems, to say the magic word that will recall the inhuman forces of carnage let loose by awkward, second-rate world-rulers. This impotency of those in high authority to deal with the horror of the present actuality the President has himself stated well in the first of his international notes: "If the contest must continue to proceed toward undefined ends by slow attrition until the one group of belligerents or the other is exhausted; if millions after millions of human lives must continue to be offered up until on the one side or the other there are no more to offer; if resentments must be kindled that can never cool and despairs engendered from which there can be no recovery, hopes of peace and of willing concert of free peoples will be rendered vain and idle."

"That only person in high authority amongst all the peoples of the world who is at liberty to speak out and hold nothing back" is not only no longer uniquely "at liberty," but he now appears the one of the Allied Premiers most inclined to sit tight till *Der Tag*. The logic of a Peace without Victory was for another day.

Whatever the value of some of Mr. Wilson's theories, the effect of this papal reply to the Pope is to prolong the war. There can be no parley with the Great Cause of the war is its argument; there may be parley only, and perhaps, with the innocent German people. Does the President count on a German revolution at the end?

Has the weather-cock swung at last to this — a war for German freedom? Is The Day for which we must wait, the day when the shackles of the German people are unloosed? We were fighting to make the world safe for democracy. More specifically we began by fighting for American rights of neutrality on the seas; we end in fighting for nothing specific at all. We embrace the cause of all causes which are anti-Middle-Europe: the cause of British South Africa, Irredentism, defensive (?) economic leagues, *restoration* of Alsace-Lorraine. Yet all these things were being fought for a year ago when the candidate who was in favor of being too proud to fight won his campaign.

May we not almost reach the conclusion that the reigning statesmen of the war are too old in years and too old in technique to create platforms that shall be international! Verily, it is no more difficult for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a nationalist statesman to conceive of an internationalist peace. Ribot has spoken. Michaelis has spoken. Lloyd-George, Balfour, and Sir Edward Carson have spoken. Wilson has written. To what effect — all?

During his five years of national leadership Woodrow Wilson has well written much that has become a fund for sound thinking on political topics; he has, for example, lifted the idea of a League to Enforce Peace from the level of a society of illuminati to the forum of world discussion. Moreover, he has achieved large, progressive measures in the times of peace: the President piped and Congress danced. And in the six months of war he has shown a masterful hand in effecting, in the face of a contentious legislative body, stupendous organization for war. We may say we hope that his reply to the Pope may be fruitful in bringing lasting peace. That it has found *Vorwaerts*, the German Socialist newspaper, not unreceptive, proves it not entirely ineffective in its aim; though *Vorwaerts* complains that it

## 22 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

does not find in the note that spirit of friendliness to the German people which might have been furnished by a plain statement that the German people should not have to suffer at the hands of its enemies. To this complaint an inadequate answer might readily be framed: that Mr. Wilson had to speak in general terms in his note in order not to tread on the toes of his confederates.

Though trusting blindly that in some way this last work of Mr. Wilson will advance real peace, we must, on the whole, confess to a keen disappointment. We had hoped the commanding representative of our new world would show a grasp of new strange principles. We had hoped that when we heard his voice again, it might give us a thrill for the encountering of new-found adjustments — such a thrill as we experienced on the mornings when the new burning of heart in Russia was heralded. Perhaps we are not longer to expect the new adaptations to be *seen* by Mr. Wilson. But surely in the tumultuous breaking up of the old order, which the present world-pain makes inevitable, some American eyes will be powerfully penetrating.

**SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA**



## ENTERING A NEW RUSSIA

There was a hidden perturbation of heart and of head as we were leaving England in April, 1918, for a *new* country, Russia! — for a country of strange social monsters with uncertain and inaccurately-reported habits and disposition. So affected by the prospects was I, myself, that that last evening we spent in London, I could not laugh at my room-mate when he asked me for directions in writing a will.

From Newcastle we steered a zig-zag course through submarine territory. German submarines were watching for English boats off the North Cape at that time, and, in cases, failing to destroy these, would, just out of spite, sink little Norwegian fishing smacks in the vicinity. To our surprise, we did not find it excessively cold in those arctic waters, the reason being that we were following the Gulf Stream to one of its termini in the neighborhood of Murmansk. Murmansk was our terminus, a Russian port open the year round, located about 200 miles east of the Norwegian North Cape, at the inner extremity of an indentation of the Kola Peninsula, rather difficult to navigate.

The town of Murmansk, built up with the coming

## 26 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

of the railroad just completed, resembled an American western boom-town or one of the new small cities of Siberia. Most of the structures, excepting the substantial log government buildings, were low log shacks, protected in the winter from the cold by moats and banked walls of close-fibered roots and tree branches, and by wool stuffed into the cracks between the logs. The many-houred sun of the northern spring had then — about April 20 — half-melted the snow and brought the roads to a very muddy and almost impassable condition. The following winter many Allied troops were quartered in Murmansk, and it was feared that with the coming of spring an epidemic would break out which would over-crowd the new, secluded cemetery on the top of the hill; but, thanks to the special preventive measures taken, the soldiers enjoyed excellent health in this region summer and winter.

We were not surprised on landing at Murmansk at six o'clock in the evening, to be informed that it was after hours of work for the wharf porters and that none could be obtained at any price. Prepared for something much more resembling an atrocity — even pleased at the negligible character of our first Russian hardship — we went to work, without grumbling, and carried our assorted baggage, heavy and light, with our own arms and hands from the dock-side to a freight car four hundred yards distant. In those first days of Soviet freedom, workmen often made hours to suit themselves and the public was damned.

Murmansk had for many months been kept full of departing missions and refugees. Almost every evening a concert was given at the town hall by a different set of these talented people, among them artistes of the Petrograd and Moscow opera houses. Picking their way over the muddy roads and the railroad tracks, on which stood their private cars, were to be seen many meticulously garbed French officers. Members of the American Red Cross Unit that had been getting out of Roumania through Russia for five weeks, gave us a certain initiation into the mysteries of the Russia of that time — the words which fell from their lips only increased the mystery, the inexplicable riddle of Russia to me. At the Y. M. C. A., which was the headquarters of the Americans in town, we met the American Lieutenant P——, who became a man of authority to us. Now I picked up in this headquarters and read with my back to the Russian stove, an amazing book to be taken to Russia as American propaganda — Henry D. Sedgewick's "The New American Type and Other Essays." Lieutenant P—— was Sedgewick's new American type, brisk in movement, shoulders slightly stooped, eyes determined and hawk-like, yet questioning; his ideas originating in a business man's highly-concentrated imagination, ingenious, yet quite fixed and irrevocable after once taking form. This fellow endeavored to communicate to us his enthusiasm for a plan to land several thousand American troops at Murmansk; "They would become a nucleus" — he proved to us, like a preacher, gesticulating — "for

## 28 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

a horde of eager Russians, waiting for an opportunity to fight the Soviets."

Murmansk's was our first Soviet. No red tape there! No questions, no customs, for us! The committee in control of local affairs were two sailors and a fireman, all from one of the unmanned Russian warships lying idle in the harbor. Two of this Soviet (committee) had lived in America for a number of years, and were especially friendly to Americans. Halsey, the Y. M. C. A. man, said their administration of affairs was not so bad as it might be. The bread, all purchased by permit at the public bakery, was cheap; the flour came from England. All the workmen were required to attend night-school — an instance of their new freedom!

We were deluged at once, of course, with many wild and miraculous tales of "progressive" Russia. The country was rife with rumors and conjectures. And it seemed to me, anything might happen in such a jumping-off place of civilization. Among other tales, was one most pertinent to us, that a train of refugees coming to Murmansk was held up by its engineer till given a bonus by the passengers. We were more inclined to believe this story when our own engineer refused to move his train. We were told he refused because the train crew was not given enough food. If true, just cause! Passengers were very careful to carry enough food for all emergencies. Why should not those who "worked their passage" be also insured against starvation? So here was a story neither picturesque nor picaresque. Whatever

adjustment was made between "labor" and "labor," the train ambled on its way the next morning, only twelve hours late.

This railroad connecting Murmansk with Petrograd had only been completed during the war. The Russian government had realized the tremendous advantages of Murmansk as a port open the year round for trade with England and America — especially at a time when the war made other Russian ports inaccessible. American contractors were intrusted with the undertaking, and at once one thousand men were employed, mostly Chinese coolies, work being begun at both ends simultaneously. The difficulties were great: the lack of population, the swampy nature of the ground, the distance from supplies. The climate was severe for the Asiatic workmen and hundreds of them died of the scurvy, a disease to which people living in that arctic country are susceptible. When the English occupied this region, their soldiers were ordered to drink lime juice as a preventive against this disease. I remember one pitiable Russian, an exile from the Southland, whom I saw afflicted with scurvy, and dying a slow death. I had to tell him there was no way for him to cross the lines and reach his home — that was during the time of the military intervention — as he very much wished to do. He had contracted the disease from under-nourishment.

The railroad runs from Murmansk to Kandalaksha, at the northernmost corner of the White Sea; to Soroka at the southwest corner; to Petrozavodsk,

## 30 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

a town of 10,000; and to Ivanka, south of Lake Ladoga, connecting at the latter place with a previously existing line to Petrograd. The length of the whole line is 650 miles, built standard-gauge, and eventually to be double-tracked.

This road was not completed in time to be of great military value during the war, but in times of future peace it will develop Russia's exports in grain, flax, and dairy products from North Russia. Archangel, the old, and only other, port in the north, is 400 miles further east, and is blocked up with ice half the year.

So we began our journey down this railroad — with destination at an immeasurable distance of both time and space — judged by our own feelings!

At least we were pretty well insured against starvation. We had with foresight purchased a two-weeks' "picnic" ration in London, the ship had given every passenger a generous allowance of food, and then Halsey had halved his larder with us; besides all this, we wise ones had laid in a secret supply of jams and chocolate that was tucked away in the corners of our trunks and bags.

In order to take all our baggage with us, we traveled to Moscow in a freight car, hobo-fourth-class, or to be precise, in a *tepluska*, which means in Russian: a freight car with a stove in it. There were four wide shelves, two on a side, with room in the center for the stove and wood. At each upper corner was a sliding window, forty by fifteen inches, and in the center were sliding doors on each side. Some

of the party thought that others often "hogged" the view at these advantageous apertures. Packed in such a traveling carriage were eleven Americans, an interpreter and two other Russian fellow-officers of the old army, together with trunks, duffle-bags, bed-rolls, boxes, and suitcases, in such quantity as to constitute us plutocrats in that country, no matter how unkempt the state of our beards. I was assigned to the steerage deck (a lower shelf) along with Woody, Beekman, and the Russians. We under-dogs slept on two trunks, apiece. In this position of outcast, I found it some reason to be thankful that it was on my own trunk that I reposed the half of me. To be sure, we were offered a seat occasionally on the top shelf, even a seat at times near a port-hole window, to be accepted, however, in a "by your leave" spirit. Till our journey's end and a re-assignment of sleeping-places took place, we not on the upper shelf remained in our feelings, "steerage passengers!"

The stove kept us warm enough. At night, with my head only four feet away from it, it kept me too warm. On this stove our meals were irregularly cooked, and then distributed in scrupulously just portions by the cook and his assistant-for-the-meal, to each man as he sat in his appointed place.

We stopped at all the stations, several hours' ride apart, for wood and water for the engine. Most of the rolling stock of this railroad and the great Mallet locomotives, fitted to burn wood, came from America. It made one unhappy to see so much

## 82 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

precious wood consumed for firing an engine, yet the point is that the wood is not precious there. Wood is used as fuel on all railroads of North Russia, large stocks of wood being piled near the tracks at certain stations. The passengers help themselves to this wood, also, to replenish the stoves of their *tepluskas*. There was great competition among the members of our party for the pleasure of splitting our wood during waits at stations.

At the stations we all alighted to scurry about; some for wood, some to join the line at the *Kypiatok* (hot-water tank), some just to scurry about. We used the hot water for tea, as did the Russians. Tea and black bread were all the Russians on the train seemed to have to live on. At the large station restaurants the Russians in our *tepluska*, however, bought small delicious native birds and other special Russian food which they delighted to talk about and share with us.

The inhabitants of this sparsely-settled country are nearly all employees of the railroad. Many of them, especially the young men, evidently flocked to the station to see every train come in; there were three through trains a week. We saw in the villages many of the Chinese who had originally been brought there as road-builders. One wondered what place they might occupy in the new social regimentation. At each station was a group of about fifteen or twenty log buildings, all new, and surprisingly well-built and neat; in some places scattered at different

elevations in a pine grove, they made a good subject for a canvas.

So were the incisive colors of that country such as to arouse the passions of an artist. I never wearied of looking out through the half-open doorway, or, on rare occasions, through a port-hole window, at the landscape: olive-green, straight, slender pines, of man-size only at the Murmansk end; shining, white mountains; long white lakes that, even then, nearly May, were still being used as high roads of ice; sunset colors fading only a brief time before the first light of very early dawn.

Near Kandalaksha, it was, I think, that we had to wait a whole night in the fear that if we proceeded we might be attacked by Finnish bands, directed by Germans who hoped to break communications along this road.

At Petrozavodsk we had a delay of six hours which nearly all the Americans improved for a visit to our first town of any size. Returning from this inspection with Bonta, I recall standing on an eminence overlooking the town and the spreading Lake Onega. Dominating everything was the pinnacle of the big church, glittering green in the soft early-afternoon sunlight, a symbol of Russian community life for centuries. It has been the materials of the one church, whether of wood or of brick, or where more than one, the number of churches, that has determined the classification of a Russian habitation as *celo*, *volost*, or *gorod*. The church has stood for

## 84 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

the life of the people-together. Now, since the revolution, this Russian people-together had taken great steps. The country over-night had become socialist. We had been traveling hundreds of miles in a country where, as a fact, land, buildings, and railroads, all were common wealth. Yet, undoubtedly, business was being carried on. Up there in the latitude of Alaska we were being carried across swamps and virgin wild country; in places the train just crawled as it passed over crooked stretches which even then were being made straight; a great deal was being done to raise and straighten the road-bed: somebody was working. We were proceeding on our journey; small matter the delays! Now the question uppermost in my mind was how social life was moving in Russia. Who and what was the new régime? Was it representative of the people-together, the people symbolized in the Petrozavodsk church tower, or was it representative only of a part of the people-together? Here was the problem with which Russia confronted me!

In Moscow, where we arrived after an exciting six days' journey, that problem became at once acute. We found the city gayly decorated for a May First celebration held the day before. I inquired about this celebration. "They had had the biggest parade the city ever saw," I was informed, "but the enthusiasm wasn't genuine; the people aren't really with the Bolsheviks; the Bolsheviks had to force citizens to join this parade; there isn't the enthusiasm about the revolution there was at first; the people are tired

of revolution; they want bread." Hearing such an interpretation of the Russian dictatorship of the proletariat, I began to speculate about the growth of minority movements in history. Granted Bolshevism was a minority movement, had it struck a policy and uttered a battle cry that would draw the masses to its support ultimately? Were the Bolshevik leaders seers, or were they only blind leaders of the blind?

The next day I decided they were blind leaders. I could not go about to see the sights of the city because all the tram-car workers had declared the church holiday was to be a complete holiday for themselves as well as for the rest of the citizenry. This big, glaring instance of personal discomfort for me, made me for that day impatient with the dictatorship of the proletariat. But that particular sort of independence on the part of the tram-car employees did not annoy the citizens of Moscow again; for the workers, not tram-car employees, were after all in a majority, and they saw to it that thereafter the tram-car people reckoned with their duty to the public as well as with their duty to themselves. In witnessing this tram-car stoppage and its lessons for the citizens, I was compelled to realize that I was in a country of primitive things, where first-starts and their failures were to discipline a people most roughly. I gained a belief, too, that the social movement at work in Russia was to involve the whole people, and that, before it ceased, it was to *express* the whole people.

## 38 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

that, at least, they were interested in current topics such as the revolution and socialism.

Then, our set sight-seeing being concluded for the time, we scrambled down the steep, rocky sides of the Kremlin, symbol of the city's Past, and were confronted, incongruously, with — was it symbolical of the city's Present? — crowds of Saturday-afternoon people — peasants in native dress sprinkled showily among them — walking in the mud about the several attractions of what they called an Americanski Circus: clowns, acrobats, side-shows, fakers, and a merry-go-round. The Russians like such fast-and-queerly-moving American Things as these, which appeal magically to a kindred savagery in themselves; Jack London is another American Thing with such an appeal. I was told that an American clown had become the great drawing-card at The Circus, one of the most popular amusement places of the city.

The city was modernized in essential ways, in the European if not in the American, sense, except that there were no sewers. The streets were roughly paved, generally with cobble stones. All buildings had electricity; telephones were common, although, in some parts of the city, unreliable after the revolution. The public buildings were of simple lines, substantially constructed, and sometimes quite imposing. The buildings of the National Bank were among the finest in all the Russian cities, the most notable being that at Nishni Novgorod. The Kazan branch of this bank held the gold reserve of the Empire, which was moved away to Siberia by the

Czechs when they captured the city. Among the best buildings were the high schools, the Technical High School, of which the American Y. M. C. A. had the use in the evening, and the Commercial School.

Kazan University, the third-oldest in the empire, continued its work in spite of political changes, although its faculty, I was given to understand, were chiefly Cadets bitterly hostile to the Bolsheviks. The imperial arms had been removed from the top of the high columns at the entrance, and the resources of the institution put at the service of a people's branch of the university. A raise in the salaries of the professors was voted by the City Soviet that summer.

Kazan had not been put on food-rations before I left in July, 1918. This part of the country should be richly self-sustaining, if the peasants could be induced to yield up their produce; the people of the province were expecting, and I understand they had, a good harvest that August and September. Prices were high except at coöperative and government stores, because speculation was quite unrestricted. A good deal appeared in the Soviet newspapers about the food-profiteers, but means had not been found at that time to curb them. Black bread was 25 cents a pound, white bread 40 cents, butter \$1.40, and cheese and honey about the same. Berries in season were relatively cheap and plentiful. Fish were easy to obtain. At the restaurants one could eat a good meat dinner for 70 cents, and at the Vegetarian

## 40 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

Restaurant, the walls of which were adorned with photographs and mottoes of Tolstoy, one could order a meal of three or four courses for 40 cents.

The population did not appear to be saddened by the war and the revolution, unless one was exclusively with the upper classes, who, indeed, for the most part gave themselves over freely to lament, and to fear worse times. In the shady ill-kept park in the center of the city one saw children gather daily for supervised games, and every evening one saw there well-dressed crowds of young people promenading. Admittance to the park was obtained only by paying a small fee, whenever a band concert or a booth-fair was held there for benefit of some war or charitable organization. Mordkin, whom I had last seen dancing with Pavlова in "Giselle" at the Boston Opera House, appeared twice on his Volga tour at Kazan to packed houses and at what seemed prohibitive prices. The Moscow Art Theater Company, also on tour, gave a finished performance of Gorki's "In the Depths" at the big City Theater. In the box opposite ours sat the President of the Kazan Soviet with his family and guests.

I was surprised to find the family with which I lived so little affected by the revolution. The owner of the house was a famous surgeon, known for his charitable cases, and on that account allowed to keep the use of all his rooms. My family living down-stairs in his house were forced to share their rooms with me; that is, having to take in somebody to share their large quarters according to soviet law,

they were glad to have me. Their furniture and personal effects, however, were absolutely untouched, their meals were better than the 70-cent dinners at the restaurants, and, as luxuries, they had a barrel of white flour and, secretly, three bottles of wine a day. In June they went to live at their datcha (villa) in a summer-village about twenty miles away. There they could buy fresh vegetables and fish, and swim every day in the Volga River. The afternoon I spent visiting them, I sat long on the beach, and enjoyed watching the vacationists in the water; the fishermen mending their interminably long nets on the shore; the fast steamers and the slow freight-boats, passing; and the wide Russian landscape, given character by the presence of the mighty river.

My first few nights in the city I heard shooting on the streets, but after that witnessed no signs of disorder. Citizens were organized into a guard for night-watches. All the automobiles in the city were in the use of the local soviet, and never have I seen machines driven along the streets so recklessly. The ban against beggars had not become a soviet decree at that time, and at many of the street corners these ancient pests were stationed. Once in the central park on my way down-town a troupe of eight beggars, that looked needy enough, actually beset me behind and before, and when I returned up-town later I was waylaid by the same band. There was a committee against Counter-Revolution as in other cities, and I knew of two of its victims, young ex-officers who were admittedly plotting the overthrow of the Bol-

## 42 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

sheviks. There was an election in the city that summer in which the Bolsheviks led the poll, with the Left-Social-Revolutionaries second, and Mensheviks and Right-Social-Revolutionaries far behind; the non-socialist parties received no votes. Non-Bolshevik newspapers sprang up of a night, often openly counter-revolutionary or anti-government, but were suppressed after one or two issues.

Conscription for the Red Army began in July. I heard how one poor prospective recruit was chased into a river. The levy officers debated whether to shoot at him as he escaped, but decided on the suggestion of a passerby to let him go. The day I left the city I saw a group of frightened boys about twenty years of age being led to army headquarters. This sort of violence illustrated the real plight of Russia, however peaceful her cities may have seemed to a foreign eye on a summer day. Kazan was captured by the Czechs and anti-Bolsheviks the first of August and recaptured by the Bolsheviks about a month later. Very likely my family in the surgeon's house lived on calmly through changes of government with their barrel of white flour and their three secret bottles of wine a day.

## WOOD FLAME

### AN IMAGINARY STORY OF THE VOLGA RIVER

The telegram had at last come through from Jaroslav, being forwarded to me from Kazan, where I had expected to be all this time! As the messenger handed it to me, even before I had seen Maria Ivanovna's name on it, I had a conviction that it was important. Now a telegram's delay of ten days, like this, does not matter so much if it is a business telegram, for in these days when there is little business, business may as well move slowly; but telegrams of Maria Ivanovna are the most important of all; Maria Ivanovna is the dearest of all my children—she grows to be like her mother at thirty! This message of hers was: "Come home at once the newspapers will explain why."

I knew what the newspapers had been saying about the city of Jaroslav. Since the first reports, when the telegram had been dispatched, rumor had multiplied on rumor. I could not be less apprehensive if all were verified, for any one rumor or a part of one was bad enough. The White Guards had taken the town by a conspiracy, these rumors began. Then the Red Guards came from the other cities and laid

## 44 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

siege, they took the Volga bridge, they took a section of the city. There were bloody battles; the priests defended their bell-towers with mounted guns; bell-towers and priests toppled together; other public buildings were destroyed! Then German and Austrian war-prisoners came as a third party to the destruction; some said, a real third-party, seeking to capture the city in the name of the Kaiser. Then we heard that fires were sweeping the place, that only a third was left standing! Do you wonder that, caught in Simbirsk and unable to procure permission to go north, I was turned half madman? For I am a householder who looks after my property and my family. In such a time I should be with my property and my family.

I think this of mine was the last telegram received that month in Simbirsk from the North. An hour after the arrival of the telegram there was a scattered firing from the guns on the hill; only a pretense of defense, and the Red Armists were leaving the town precipitately. At the wharves was a panic. People tumbling over themselves and their baggage in their eagerness to embark. Nevertheless, I was successful in crowding my way into one of the first of the departing boats. There was no question of the official permissions for departure then. The very man who had refused me a permission every day for a week past, the debonair young Commissar of Foreign Affairs, came on board, himself a fugitive, at Undoree, the first stop beyond Sim-

birsk, and took up a position beside me in third class.

This was the first time I ever traveled third-class. My fellow-passengers were a familiar enough sight, mostly peasants who had gone down the river to get flour and were now returning with all that the law would allow. I had known the peasantry since my boyhood when I had played with the peasant boys on my grandfather's estate: I had had great respect for these boys who excelled me in sports; nevertheless, I will admit I secretly half begrudged them their liberation from slavery, which had taken place the year I was born.

I had chosen as the most ventilated part of this pack of humanity on the lower floor of the big boat, the open deck at the stern. Here one was directly under the heavens: he received sunlight, starlight, and showers as they came. Showers came twice, and I was glad of the protection of half the Commissar's soldier's overcoat. At night, my pillow, a bag of meal, was shared with four other heads. During the whole voyage, some one I think was always asleep up against that bag of meal. I had come away in such a hurry that I had brought no food with me, but the Lord provided: as a matter of course, the Bolshevik and I became guests at meals of a hearty, stout peasant lady, who seemed always to be nursing a baby, even when pouring out tea for us. She had two other children along with her. The bag of meal was hers; it was her family, the Commissar and

I, who were pillow-mates. The Commissar had bread and cheese — the best black bread I ever tasted, made, he said, by his *goreetchnia*. He had other good things prepared by this benefactress, among which were quantities of sugared cookies; such a rarity in these days! All these things he drew from a little plaid bag, in which he seemed to have every necessary article for a month of traveling.

I don't wonder that his *goreetchnia* made him sugar cookies. He won even my temperate heart soon after the boat steamed away from the hillside village of Undoree. He was short and thick-set; his cheeks were full; his lips, large; his face was unshaven for several days, and his wavy, brown hair was uncombed. His eyes were a pale blue and dreamy. The whole lower part of his face combined with the eyes to give the impression of a care-free, light-thoughted son of Adam. He smiled constantly as he talked in an engaging, slow, somewhat-husky voice.

In response to the immediate interest I took in him, he volunteered his own story. It did not concern him to know first my political views. He was so ingenious about his own, that before our journey together was finished, I had confided to him just how bitter a counter-revolutionary I really was. His name was Nicolai Timofevitch Asakaloff. He was Ukrainian, his native city being Kieff. When the war broke out he was assistant-engineer running locomotives in a Kieff freight-yard. He was commandeered to run supply trains at the front in

Poland, and later, out in several directions from Minsk. He knew all about locomotives, he said. He compared American, German, and Russian engines: the Russian were the best on the whole. I can believe he knows an infinite deal about the locomotive, or will know. He would have continued the subject all night I suppose but for the intervention of the nursing peasant—I was less interested in engines than he thought, but so eager was his manner of conversation that I could have enjoyed it if he had chosen a topic even more indifferent—he talked with his whole body expressively.

The peasant-mother intervened to invite us to tea. I had just watched her, as she went for hot water with a battered tin kettle, wriggle her way through groups standing and groups sitting to the *kypiatok* in the dark bowels of the boat; there was no other passage-way than the one she made for herself, in that seething crowd of fellow-travelers. During her absence the young Commissar had held her baby with one hand, with the other gesticulating about his engines. We all arranged ourselves for tea as if conditions were more propitious: turned a cramped leg, and straightened out our clothes; the two little girls smoothed their laps as if to put napkins on them as at a children's party. Nicolai Timofevitch drew out of his plaid bag an extra glass for me; the peasant family had two glasses, the girls shared one; the infant had just had refreshment and was about to enjoy more. The mother gave to all of us some of her white bread; to Nicolai, the largest portion.

It seemed to me that Nicolai's black bread with butter and cheese was the finest delicacy I had ever tasted. Nicolai continued to keep the direction of the talk. He started our hostess off on a story of the experience of her husband with farm machinery. This stalwart woman knew whereof she was talking: it was easy to gather that she was as much the helpmate of her man in the field as about the hearth.

As we talked the boat approached Tetjushee. Suddenly came a shot out of a clear sky across the stern. The peasant woman crossed herself, thanking God for deliverance; I followed her example; Nicolai turning to me, smiled, and rushed with nearly all the others to the landward side of the boat to see what was happening. The Soviet guard was coming aboard. Everybody pulled out his permission paper. The soldiers simply looked around at us down in third class: I could not have chosen a safer place. I avoided the eyes of the guards, though, I am sure, there was nothing suspicious about my appearance. I know how to look the workman; just a few touches give the disguise: a little pulling-down of the hat-brim, a little pulling-up of the coat-collar.

We two prepared ourselves to sleep about dark, eleven by the new time. The peasant mother and children had long before settled for the night. It was soft starlight. The water lapped the sides of the boat as it steadily forced its path. First and second-class passengers could be seen now and then walking around their decks above. Below, with us,

most had curled up among their bags to sleep — there was not room to stretch full-length. A few, in two different groups, were still talking, the moving tips of their cigarettes throwing a light that made their faces appear unreal. Several rafts passed us, and the boatmen on them were singing their songs I love. Out of the night came those songs, accompanied by a splash of oars: songs unearthly, half-lament, expressing vague beauty — a hope, only a hope of something good from fate. Nicolai, humming one of these chants long after the singers were passed by, put himself to sleep. It was not a cold night as summer nights on a Volga boat go, but I did not object when Nicolai had thrown half his purple-gray soldier's ulster over me. The coat did not seem to give as much heat as his body, wedged in close to mine. The general odor from that sleeping mass around me was not, I suppose, exactly salubrious; though, to confess the truth, I was not as much troubled by it as a man of my class should have been. Besides I was looking up at the stars; it was them I saw, not the sleeping mass; my head was very close on the meal-sack to Nicolai's and his breathing was odorless, just agreeable sound!

The peasant lady awakened me for tea in the morning by a vigorous tug at the elbow. I am sure she would have let Nicolai sleep on, if it had been he who was the sleepy-head. Her partiality for him was not in words, but evident enough. I did not mind. She knew I did not mind. Nicolai had already made many friends in the stern. He had a

way with these people. It was no great matter to him, I believe, whether he was third-class or first. He was third-class now, as was I, because there had been no other accommodations.

We were drawing near to the landings at Kazan. By pre-arrangement, our peasant family spread themselves out to keep our places for us, and Nicolai and I pressed our way off the boat. It was a relief to move our big muscles freely again. Stationed amid the traffickers lining the bridge to the wharf was a lovely child selling wooden spoons, souvenirs of Kazan. Just for the chance to talk with her, and for having nothing to do, I negotiated for a spoon. Nicolai bought cigarettes, fruit water, and honey in the comb. As we were standing on the wharf bridge smoking, of a sudden he pressed my hand gently. It was an involuntary movement of his, a signal to a pal — it was years since I had felt such a pressure. I looked in the same direction as he, but was too late: a young woman had passed and was already half-hidden by those passing after her to the boat. Nicolai remarked: "Beautiful large eyes, beautiful!" and without more turned to chat with an ugly beggar that interested him. In my mind I was seeing those beautiful large eyes of my daughter Maria Ivanovna, and the eyes of her mother. Had any harm befallen my family in Jaroslav?

I had most cause to worry about my son Michail, a hot-headed young officer, who was sure to have taken part with the White Guards in the uprising. To him, if the uprising failed, the Bolsheviks would

show no mercy. I was ready to believe the worst tales of Jaroslav. I am not a skeptic as to the brutality of man toward man. I have witnessed more than one pogrom against the Jews — in fact, I once helped to organize a mild one; I have witnessed the ferocity of strikes, and in the course of one in 1905, barely escaped assassination; in 1915 and 1916 I was commandant in certain towns of Lithuania when they were recaptured from the Germans, and the complaints brought to me of outrages committed by our soldiers, though exaggerated to some extent by those suffering the invasion, should attest the fact that man can be a beast. My wife insists I am a pessimist, but, myself, I believe we ought to be honest with ourselves and admit that we've got the brute in man to calculate for.

The wharf bells rang for the departure of the boat; Nicolai took my arm and hurried me back to our peasant friends; and I ceased to imagine what beastliness there might be at Jaroslav. There was a lovely sunset that evening to behold — a sunset which tinted the clouds to the very zenith. We at the stern had the benefit of its full glory only briefly as the boat was following the deep channel across the river. The slanting rays made resplendent the white walls and gilded domes of a castle-like monastery, which, half-way up the high bank at a bend in the river, commanded a wide view. We passed a whale-shaped island of glittering sandy-shoal. On the right bank were flat fields of grain; very fertile I thought — I was glad to see the grain so lush and

nearly ripe; I am not quite as mean as to wish famine on the country just to spite the Reds. Beyond the grain were low wooded hills. In the slanting rays, the fields were very bright and the woods very dark. Our boat came nearer than a stone's throw to the left bank, which rose as a cliff, steep and rocky, dark and cool.

At this hour the upper deck was crowded as at no other time during the day with first and second-class passengers, walking arm-in-arm, after dinner. Nicolai was watching them as I dreamed the dreams of sunset. Again that involuntary pressure on my hand, and again I was too late to catch sight of the lady's face! She wore a bright yellow sweater. She was walking alone, swiftly and nonchalantly, for all the world like my Maria Ivanovna. Nicolai whispered in my ear: "She looked at me, and I think she smiled." I looked full into his roguish face and replied, "How could she help it!" which was a little more than I intended to say. At the same time there flashed through my mind the idea of my Maria's liking this fellow. What if he had the fascination for her he seemed to have for other people! No! Such a thing couldn't be! As between men, fascination is a raw, elemental, unrefined matter; but a woman does not permit herself to show liking for a man till she has ascertained his secondary social qualities.

After the sun was down and the cool came on, we smoked his cigarettes, one after the other, till all were gone. Then I came to understand why he was

a Bolshevik. He told me first how he experienced the Revolution. The supply system at the front, which had gone from bad to worse, was reorganized by committees of the railroad men themselves after the March Revolution. Nicolai worked upon one of these committees. He was proud of it! After the October Revolution he became a Bolshevik with many of his railroad friends and served on more committees. He was proud of it! "A poor thing to be proud of," you say. Perhaps, but you did not see the sincerity in those pale blue eyes, you did not note the ringing assertion in his husky voice. If you had, and if you are a man of any response to the feelings which move those beside you, you would have felt as I did, great respect for his feeling of pride.

Nicolai was willing to pay the cost of his proletarian beliefs! When the Czechs took Samara and a new internal front was created along the Volga, he hastened to Simbirsk to run supply trains for the Red Army. As the Czechs advanced, the Soviet, bearing in mind the fate of the Commissars of Samara, feared for their lives, and one of them, the Commissar of Foreign Affairs, "skipped the town." My young engineer took the vacant post, angry with several who had declined it out of fear.

Nicolai considered himself lucky to escape alive from the ugly things that undoubtedly happened at Simbirsk. As he was fleeing the city, fortunately it was into the hands of a Czech band that he fell, rather than into the hands of the local White Guards, who might have recognized him. The Czechs never

suspected him of being the Commissar of Foreign Affairs. Who would! But he was a Bolshevik—he was running away—so they took from him everything he had: his watch, all his money, and a fine new overcoat he had just purchased second-hand at the officers' coöperative selling society with the proceeds of his first month's advance salary. He escaped by his face, which made him a friend in one of the Czech guards. This Czech connived at Nicolai's sudden disappearance down a side street. Then with money hastily borrowed from a friend, and with a good supply of bread and cheese presented by his *goreetchnia*, he set out on foot. Two miles from the city he hired a peasant to drive him to Undoree.

Such was the revolutionary history of Nicolai Timofevitch. I should have expected to find his Bolshevism just personal history—a narrative Bolshevism; but I learned it was argumentative as well. The Bolsheviks should not have been the only party for a self-respecting Russian workman to join after the fall of the monarchy, but so it had seemed to Nicolai. He tried to show me why. "The freedom of the workman is safe only in his own hands," he said; "he is not safe to delegate it even to a Constituent Assembly uncontrolled by workmen." I listened and did not attempt to refute. Why should I? That would only have interrupted his flowing fervor. It was a beautiful whole he pictured; if a strong man pulled out one pillar, the whole would have fallen into pieces. As he waxed warm describ-

ing the corner-stones, "justice for all" and "all for justice," his tone had the religious note. I was awed. I became convinced of the value of his opinions to him; there was that much truth in them. I was more than tolerant; it would have hurt me to think his high hopes were all a lie; and I remember saying once, just to indulge him, "perhaps, after all, if I were as young as you, or ever, by power of imagination and faith, had been as young, I might come to be guilty of holding these harsh opinions."

At seven o'clock we drew up to the Camilot wharf at Nishni Novgorod, the Bolshevik's present destination. These large Volga boats are tied up in a second, but getting ashore, for us at the rear in third class, was a matter of twenty minutes. One by one, bag and baggage, the third-class passengers marched slowly over the gang-plank. As I waited there in turn — confronted closely with our meal-sack, now on the peasant mother's back — it struck me afresh what a patient creature our Russian peasant is! Our peasant companions stood there in line, weighted down with their precious flour, without a whimper! The calm and stolidity of nature herself was in their faces.

To live in that mass of simple people for three days: to eat, to sleep, to smoke among them was a quieting experience! It was quieting to be with them, even in their crowding and confusion: the hot words which they exchanged often with one another did not come out of their deeper currents. These last days on the stern of this boat I had been caught

## 56 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

up in those currents, the worries that had fretted me for months became insignificant: I could wait for time to unfold the truth about Jaroslav, about the future of my country, about the end of the great World War; I could wait just as these folks did; eternity was the present! And sitting there among them, I breathed deeply, I was at peace with myself.

Or was this frame of mind, in some degree, the influence of one man, my companion in this unique travel? Wasn't it that in the presence of this honest fellow, it was impossible to think hard thoughts, strained thoughts! Perhaps, though, I give him qualities he does not deserve, qualities not recognized in him by those who had known him longer! I was about to enter into a period of doubt about him, myself.

As we stood waiting, Nicolai, to beguile the time, was using his last chance to plumb the naïveté of the nursing-mother and her girls, but I could see he was impatient, in contrast to the rest of us, to be off the boat. Winking slyly, he asked me if I thought he might recognize on shore the girl of the yellow sweater! "But, seriously," I thought to myself, "he does not intend to look for that girl. Little good it would do him, if he does!" That he should be bent on leaving me forthwith as a mere boat acquaintance, hurt me; but, in face of his apparent indifference, or thoughtlessness, I was too proud myself to suggest, as I wished, that we eat together on the hill at the "Metropole," my favorite restaurant in the city — there was time to go there,

the boat would not leave for four or five hours. But so it was, as soon as we were off the boat, he gave me his remaining bread, gave me one of his cards, not very clean, and wished me a good journey on to Jaroslav. "Better stay away from that town awhile: it's an uncomfortable place for contra-revolutionaries just now," he said. As he finished speaking, he dashed off and left me in the crowd, very lonesome. I wanted to dash on after him to see what he would do. The bread he bequeathed me was a nuisance to carry. It occurred to me that that was why he had given it to me.

With the bread under my arm I wandered into the town. I quickly left behind the dirty region of the wharfs and made my way through the street gate of the old Kremlin wall where it reaches furthest down the hill. Once on the bluff, I had range of the two rivers, the Volga and the Oka, the shipping, the ragged lines of the city, and the flat fields across the Volga. My mood of meanness disappeared.

I love the city of Nishni most, of all Russian cities except my native Jaroslav and Mother Moscow. I think I could be content every night to walk among the gay crowd taking the air in the Nishni Kremlin. In it are several places to buy drinks, where there is good music; and at a very small shop is to be had ice cream of different flavors.

As I strolled in the park, by chance I met my friend, Alexander Sergeivitch Pianoff. There was no hesitation; we went directly to "The Metropole," though he had already dined at home: Alex-

ander Sergeivitch and I could recall happy hours spent at that restaurant, when, in our student days, I visited him in Nishni. Like other such haunts of mine, the place had changed within a year; it had lost its savor; the linen was not fresh; the women were shorn of jewels; the music, even, was without spirit, or so it seemed. We sat at a small table in our old corner, into which the brilliant light at the center of the room penetrated only a little. Alexander Sergeivitch was telling me his troubles, the typical troubles of a gentleman in these times; pretty much an old story!—we are all suffering from the ravages of the same foe, and I did not attend diligently to all he said.

I was scanning the faces of the diners, when to my blank astonishment I discovered sitting at a small table across the room, and chatting like old acquaintances, Nicolai Timofevitch and—would you believe it!—Maria Ivanovna, my daughter Maria! It was she who wore the yellow sweater, then; her telegram failing to bring answer, she must have gone to Kazan herself to find me, and disappointed, she was now returning up the river. But why was she with the Bolshevik Commissar? Had he known her all the time? Or was this—no, Maria would never flirt with an entire stranger! To be sure Maria was always a venturesome girl, but this far I never knew her to go. If they had met, where? But how could my Maria possibly “meet” this fellow. He was common; only an empty-headed, glib-tongued boy of the streets; a jovial companion to

carry along one's fishing-tackle for a day's excursion, but for more — his perpetual grin would quickly tire one to death! Yes, they must have met before: he must have rendered her some service in the past and now she was rewarding him too generously by giving him a dinner at the best restaurant in town. Maria is a pure idealist, I know; I have always been afraid she would take a turn to the anarchists. It's her mother she takes after in this lack of common sense. Certainly not her father! the nearest I ever came to being a "Red," was a friendship at law school with a youth that a few years later had to be sent to Siberia. And it was that fellow I had picked to lead all of us in the eyes of the world; I used to pride myself on my intuition in this matter, for it was shared by no one else in the school.

Just which of those troubles of the upper classes fell to all of us in a period of tyranny, Pianoff was describing as his, more or less, I did not catch fully: I kept an eye peeled in the direction of the small table across the room. He sat with his back to me; she was mostly hidden from me by a huge palm, except that her face was clearly visible when, in gusts of eagerness — a way with her and her mother — she bent forward and spoke to the Bolshevik. I did not like to see it, but I was forced by her very witchery to watch her: I may as well admit that Maria has always had her way with me; she never teased for what she wanted; she had only to look in her peculiar way. The question came: "Who is this that stirs her to appear so at her best and in her

most bewitching manner!" The answer came to me, no doubt telepathically from Maria as I watched her: "He stirs her, he interests her; for the moment she forgets why she travels." Then I observed him. "Yes, the very person who made *me* forget why *I* traveled!"

Then I returned to my coffee and Alexander Sergeivitch. I smoked one of his cigarettes. I was listening to dull tales about his wife and son, when the Bolshevik and Maria arose from the table to leave. He paid the bill, he tipped the servants: clearly, the dinner was his. With few words, I made my apologies to Alexander Sergeivitch for the necessity of an abrupt departure: I had not realized it was getting so late; it would be serious to miss even one boat while things were so unsettled; I must insist that he was not to see me to the boat — his wife was entertaining guests alone at home already too long, etc.

I followed them to the park. They walked at the top of the hill, among the crowd, but not of it. Other people were looking at them — they were a vivacious pair, a handsome pair, of about the same height; but, in all other points a sharp contrast. But they saw no one; they were busily talking, or standing at the edge of the path and looking down in silence.

It was dusk. The sun was down; its light shot up into a baggy, black cloud hanging over the west; and, under this, on each side along the horizon, it made thin clouds resemble delicate pink scarves. To

the east was a sheet of cloud which let down rain in streaks of light. Below this cloud had just appeared a large, jagged, jug-shaped moon, laced with thin racing clouds. The water of the river, wrinkled by the wind and spun with a scarcely-perceptible reflection of sunset pink, was, in the dusk, the brightest section of the landscape. It was the time also when the larger city lights were first seen; and spasmodically over in the direction of the railroad station a shooting rocket rose and fell. It was not all quiet. One of the three war hydroplanes was still up and just buzzing home to its tent on the beach at the junction of the rivers. A fleet of war boats, including one four-stack destroyer, were screeching the same raucous signal, one after the other.

He and she stopped to look at this scene, often for ten minutes at a time. Then they never talked. At such times they appeared to be strangers to each other. Then Nicolai would lead her again into the concourse of promenaders. Her arm was in his, and once, as they turned from the path of outlook, I thought that he pressed her hand more than was necessary to guide her; and that for an instant she swayed slightly toward him. It made me angry again. "Where had they met before?"

I followed them down to the Camelot wharf. I saw them parting. He did not hurry away as he had from me. After the shaking of hands, he lingered, she lingered. He lost his smile; his grief was so genuine that I felt ashamed for the ill thoughts

I had borne him — that I felt restrained from going over to speak to him. He was moving off; in a few moments he would be gone, gone in his smiling flesh, irrevocably. He went.

“Where did you meet before, Maria?”

“Him? We never met before to-day. Our eyes met yesterday on the boat. His eyes are very bold and commanding!”

“Maria!”

“Father!”

“I cannot understand how this happens. I never dreamed I should suffer such humiliation.”

“Such humiliation?”

“That you make the acquaintance of this rascalion as if you were a girl of the people!”

“My knight came to claim me. Instantly, I knew his rank and his honor.”

“So! a romance! You are not the daughter I thought. You will tell me, perhaps, that you love the Bolshevik!”

“I do!”

“You — do! He loves you?”

“I wonder!”

“Then you didn’t discuss — eh — love? He didn’t make love to you?”

“You are silly, father. Whoever *discusses* love! Did we look as if we were discussing love? You saw us!”

“As I told you, I saw you both together at the

restaurant and along the promenade. I followed you."

" You followed us! You were going to shoot him, I suppose!"

" I suppose I did think of some such thing."

" Only you couldn't get a gun anywhere. They wouldn't let you have a gun, you old counter-revolutionist!"

" You discussed politics with the Bolshevik?"

" Well, I know he is a Bolshevik, a very nice Bolshevik!"

" And you don't care that the man you love, is a Bolshevik?"

" I do not care what are the politics of the men I love."

" The *men* you love. How many men do you love?"

" I never count."

" Your answers are not respectful."

" That is not a new complaint against me, father."

" No! You see I do not understand you: I have said that before, haven't I? I am amazed: How can you love a man in a day!"

" Love a man for a day?"

" Yes. Put it so: would you love a man for a day?"

" You catechize, father. Time isn't the length of love."

" Well, I will not catechize you. I guess I do not know much of such things. Your mother might

## 64 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

teach you a thing or two — though I am not so sure. Your mother was the only woman I ever loved — a life-long love. What is the length of love, Maria?"

"What is length of fire? Some woods burn longer than others. Some coals burn longer than others. Coal burns longer than wood. Love lasts longest where there is most to consume."

"And how long will your present flame consume — this boy of the people?"

"Not much longer, father, I fear. This is wood, not coal. Wood flame has many shapes and many colors!"

"How? What is the matter with the fellow? I was just preparing myself to look upon him as son-in-law. Perhaps I could grow to tolerate him, if you persisted in your fancy. After a time I would like him."

"No, you wouldn't! He wouldn't have much respect for you."

"Perhaps that is the kind of people I prefer!"

"Gospadeen Asakaloff is not like me, though; his disrespect might not be like mine. He and I are as different as the poles."

"Of course! You think he is an infinitely better person than yourself."

"No, he is no better than I. Only he has had more opportunities."

"Oh, yes, more opportunities!"

"To be a sensible human being."

"He is very wise, you think."

"Wise! Not at all. He never had so much more

than other people that he had to be prudent."

"He certainly is uncivilized — easily fathomed. That is why you have tired of him in a day."

"I tire of him! Ha! It would be he that tired of me in a day. It is he who is unfathomable. Him I would never understand in all the days. Father, I offer you this consolation: I was never picked up by a man before."

"I think we might be able to make something of the chap; if we could bring out the good in him."

"Cover over the good!"

"And civilize him; he would drop his proletarian theories. When shall we see him again, do you think?"

"Probably never!"

"Probably never! Hasn't he your address?"

"Yes, he asked for it and I gave it. It hurt me: it was the first formality of the evening!"

"And what is to prevent you from seeing each other again?"

"I don't know. Simply, I feel we shall not."

"You do not intend to see each other, to correspond!"

"Just now we intend to see each other for life, and to correspond when we don't."

"You exchanged —?"

"Vows! Nonsense, of course not! He didn't make love to me, I tell you. That is, it wasn't what you call making love."

"And you simply let this man slip out of your reckoning?"

## 66 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

“It is a cruel thought!”

“Come, child! Why imagine such heartless thoughts? See here, I have his card! I was with him on the boat coming to Nishni. He isn’t just the sort of man I should cultivate, but if you see something in him, why then I —”

“Would cultivate him!”

“Yes, I shall invite him to Jaroslav. I shall offer him good employment there. We will make a man of him. He shall not go out of our lives.”

“Make bright plans, father; but in a month you will have picked another man for son-in-law. Perhaps I should have another man picked for myself.”

“Maria, you are content to love this man for a day?”

“I am not content. But this discontent of to-night is almost better than content; the uncertainty and brevity of it — well, it’s unforgettable! It was a splendid evening we spent. The view from the Nishni Kremlin was wonderfully beautiful.”

“The sunset on the Volga last night was also beautiful.”

“They said it was fine, but I wasn’t interested. I was reading in my cabin. I don’t care to see every fine sunset.”

“But to-night you seemed to enjoy the sunset so much that you forgot Gaspadeen Asakaloff for a few minutes. I saw that you both stood and looked and said nothing: you seemed to be strangers to each other.”

“I did not forget him, but something did come

between us; something terrible and wide; as wide as the world, and as terribly irresistible as the coming of another twilight — mysterious and pulsating like to-night's!"

## COUNTER-REVOLUTION

I was on the ground in Soviet Russia where Counter-revolution first raised its head to be formidable. Here was beginning a revolutionary movement that was respectable, that attracted all those elements of the population formerly within the sacred circle of somebodies. Hitherto, revolution was a despised thing, generally treason. Now it was a glorified struggle, one hundred per cent. patriotic. The ninety-five per cent. nobodies had gained power.

As the Germans, or a part of them, had long had *Der Tag*, so had the Russians, all except a paltry few, always had a day when Russia should rise triumphant the Russia of the Masses. Russian literature is full of such a day. It was the embodiment of this hope, this day of Ivan, the nobody, that gave the work of Dostoeffsky and Tolstoy its power and hold on the Russian people. Even in Russian short stories one can perceive a groping recognition of class struggle and a crystalizing anathema against the proud and exclusive use of material possessions.

Well, the day of the Masses had come! The Proletariat was making their will felt. Those of us who considered it a privilege to be in Russia then saw the dawning of The Day as a miraculous yet accom-

plished fact, beside which all the terror and injustice there was sank to insignificance.

And now the dispossessed class, at first stunned by its sudden fall, raised its head again; Reaction began in the summer of 1918. For a time the Bourgeoisie had hoped to crawl back to power by compromise, and by sprinkling soft words here and there, insinuating the necessity of themselves and of their virtues to the state. The Proletariat through its sane and most trusted deputies acknowledged the virtues in their intelligence and training, but doggedly refused to yield supreme power.

The first outbreaks of counter-revolutionary zeal amounted to little but to cause the establishment of a counter-revolutionary tribunal with which to combat them; they provoked what terror there was; they brought out inter-class embitterment. Here and there the Whites gained a city for a few hours; they waged battle about and in Jaroslav for a week.

But the Whites were few in numbers, practically the officer-element alone, and they were cowardly. The thing that gave them courage and support was the uprising of the Czech prisoners in Russia at the instigation of the Allied chancellories. Here were soldiers as well as officers who would fight recklessly. These Czech fathers and sons most of all wanted to go home; in a strange country they felt obedient to Czech commands from above; accordingly, they did the best thing they knew under the circumstances; they did not know that above the Czech commands from above was operating the jugglery of the Allied

## 70 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

chancellories; they did not know the import of their act to Russia. To Russia it meant two years of civil warfare. Every part of Russia suffered from it. To Kolchak and Denikin and their ilk it brought shame and a foul name as well as other miseries.

The Czechs made some ostensible excuse, of course, for their sudden turning against their erstwhile friends. The Czechs and other war prisoners had been treated with extraordinary kindness in Russia, particularly after the Bolshevik revolution. [The Proletariat considered them no natural enemies of its own and hailed them as comrades of the International.

An occasion for the uprising was made of a quarrel as to whether the Czechs should be armed. The story went that the Bolsheviks, very likely scenting trouble, refused to give arms to their prisoners. Then the Czechs, at the command of their officers, took arms. The Bolsheviks protested. The Czechs took possession of the cities of Pensa, Syzran, and Samara. The Czechs in this body making the first offensive numbered not more than ten thousand men, but, scattered through Siberia were a hundred thousand of them more or less. These Czechs in Siberia simultaneously seized stations along the Trans-Siberian railroad and soon had an anti-Bolshevik government established throughout Siberia. Never before, I suppose, when civil war threatened a country, has a force of its own war-prisoners been powerful enough to precipitate the war. Everybody, including the Bolsheviks, believed the situation to be

critical. I was with several American Y. M. C. A. workers at Kazan, which now became a "front." A fine dwelling on my street was requisitioned for the headquarters of Murayov, commander of the first Red army. Aëroplanes were flying over the city.

Samara, two days' journey on the Volga River south from Kazan, was captured by the Czechs June 9. The Red Guard there was caught unawares. Many of them were forced into the river and some drowned; others, running without any clothes through the streets of the city, were shot by partisans. The entrance of the Czech army into the city is made a veritable triumph by the anti-Bolsheviks. Flowers are strewn at the feet of the victorious war-prisoners; elaborate dinners and balls are given in their honor; diamonds flash again and costly raiment appears out of secret hiding-places, confirming a suspicion of mine that all the luxuries of living had not suddenly passed into Soviet coffers; in the cathedral church the bishop allows the occasion to be marked by a service of extra pomp, and by the lighting of all the church candles as at Easter.

All the Commissars of Samara found were killed on the spot. The Czechs let it be known that they intended to destroy all the Bolshevik Commissars they should ever find in any city. This was a part of their boast and assurance that all Russia would soon be in their hands. A counter-revolutionary Y. M. C. A. man who was in Samara at the time of its capture reported to us that the Czechs had strong and brave forces, and that thousands of Russians

## 72 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

had joined their ranks. The Kazan press, however, declared that this reputed Russian increment consisted of boys only.

It was, of course, of great moment how the Russians looked upon the Czechs. Beyond any doubt, the "officer" and White Guard element, and, in fact, all counter-revolution except its fringes, looked upon these lusty Czechs as its savior, and hoped eagerly for a swift military conquest of Moscow itself by the Czechs for its own benefit. What the working-men and peasants thought was not so clear, but, generally, they seemed to oppose the new counter-revolutionary government set up by the Czech commander and composed of so-called "Constituent Assembly" men. The Mensheviks categorically refused to participate in the new government. Some of this opposition at Samara came to a head several days after the coup, in a riot in which 40 people were killed. In a daily column of a Bolshevik newspaper, under the heading; "Where Bolsheviks are not," I read that the Russians in the territory occupied by the Czechs were loudly discontented with their self-elected deliverers; that peasants refused them bread, and that workmen were striking in protest against their decrees. The Czechs very wisely did not wait upon any popularity they might have, but proceeded to the formation of a people's army, declared to be voluntary, but, even at the time partly conscripted, and, subsequently almost entirely conscripted.

The Czech victories were made possible by the

weakness of the "Red Army," which was then little more than the dregs of the old army just demobilized. Only rough men who liked soldiering as a business and those who would not look to peace-time employment hung on in the ranks. In addition to them were many attracted to the army by high pay and good food rations. Discipline was lacking, and drill ridiculously insufficient; moreover, the old officers and generals, who later led the army to such brilliant achievements, had not yet gone over to the Bolshevik side. Such commanders as the army had were none too trustworthy; that General Murayov, of whom I spoke, was accused of dealing with the Czechs and counter-revolutionaries, and was arrested. In the ranks, too, revolutionary loyalty could not be depended upon. During these critical days I heard that one of the Red regiments fighting at Simbirsk to stem the Czech advance, struck and demanded two months' pay in advance. Under threat of force one month's pay was given over to the soldiers and motors were sent to Kazan to bring back another month's pay. Instead of extortion money, machine guns were dispatched from Kazan and the mutineers were finally overpowered by troops more loyal.

Under spur of necessity, a new "Red Army" was being formed by the energetic Trotsky. Pay was raised still higher. Some of the old officers consented to take positions. A new discipline was imposed. Old munition plants were set going again; I read in a Kazan newspaper that a munition works

had been reopened in that city. The essential feature in the rebuilding of the army was the development of the idea of labor battalions. The factories were urged to send contingents of real Communists. The reports from the front described how bravely these labor companies fought. It is admitted now that the successes of the new army would have been impossible without the valor and enthusiasm of these troops; they were the shock troops of the army. Often in the city of Kazan I saw detachments of Red soldiers that did not appear like the rabble I had expected to see; they must have been representatives of the "new" army, for they were young, upstanding, and clean-looking.

Not only had the Proletariat a disorganized army to begin its fighting with; it had, also, a divided citizen-body; citizens of many political shades were plotting against the Bolsheviks. Furthermore, the very bottom of government was uncertain: the Soviet was a raw, untried, new-fashioned instrument for governing.

The Soviet form of government had one fundamental weakness for a new government: a basic principle of it was decentralization. Moscow was not the rallying point and guide and authority it was later to become. The Bolsheviks are great believers in the doctrine of "state's rights." We know that in the early and in the later history of a certain great republic support of this doctrine produced periods of instability. Perhaps excessive decentralization is a disease common to the childhood of

federalism. This principle was even made constitutional in the new Russia. The Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic states (Art. I: Chapt. 1, Sec. 2) that "The Russian Soviet Republic is organized on the basis of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics"; and in (Art. I; Chapt. 4, Sec. 8) states that "In its efforts to create a league — free and voluntary, and for that reason all the more complete and secure — of the working classes of all the peoples of Russia, the third Congress of Soviets merely establishes the fundamental principles of the Federation of Russian Soviet Republics, leaving to the workers and peasants of every people to decide the following questions at their plenary sessions of their Soviets; namely, whether or not they desire to participate, and on what basis, in the Federal Government and other Federal Soviet institutions."

This constitutional principle was adhered to instinctively. In the early months of Bolshevism, it was only by courtesy that one Soviet recognized the arrangements of another Soviet. At the most it might be said that the decrees of the Moscow Soviet were only weighty precedent. An American consular agent came to Kazan to distribute President Wilson's speeches in Russian in the factories. The local city Soviet was willing that this literature should be distributed, but would give no written order compelling factory heads to admit the gentleman. This doughty American — I met him — pressed it upon the city fathers that the Moscow Soviet and

## 76 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

all the other Soviets with which he had had dealings had given him a written order; that was as it was, but Kazan was obedient unto Kazan only.

Local independence was carried to the point of secession. Many parts of old Russia, such as Finland, the Baltic Provinces, and the Ukraine, had already declared their independence of the old imperial ties. Other states were on the point of following their example. It was reported that the Georgians were eager to set up their own sovereignty; also the Don Cossacks were restless and agitating for a Don republic. Separatist tendencies were not only geographical. The Tartars held a convention which bespoke some sort of internal autonomy for their race, scattered though it was over a wide area. Even the cotton producers and merchants were meeting in Moscow in the separate interests of the Kingdom of Cotton; they wished Cotton autonomy — under All-Russian Federation protection.

Perhaps the most demoralizing of all disruptive forces within the Soviet realm were the bitter attacks the government had to withstand from both the Left and the Right. The Anarchists, at the Left, were a powerful party in some cities. In Samara, for example, they made a strong bid for power in May, and once when the Bolshevik troops were outside the city fighting, they took control, deposed the Bolshevik Commissars and installed some of their own. Their coup lasted about six hours, till the Red troops returned.

The Right Social Revolutionary and Menshevik Socialist parties were no less hostile. The Socialist leaders of these parties, being no longer the directors of the Socialist activity, were smarting under the eclipse they suffered. They preferred to save the Revolution in their own way and not under the Bolshevik ægis. It was not till a year later that they realized that the only way for them to help to save the Revolution was to support the Bolsheviks, or, at least, its Red Army, in the campaigns against Kolchak and Denikin.

The Social Revolutionaries (except the Left Social Revolutionaries) and the Mensheviks were decried by the Bolsheviks as counter-revolutionaries, as in truth, at that time, many of them were. Openly, these moderate Socialists were finding fault with the Bolsheviks, as, of course, it was easy to do: the Bolsheviks had not yet brought about Utopia as some people expected they might; hunger was increasing instead of decreasing. Secretly, the Moderates were responsible for a reign of terror, anti-Bolshevik, which began the last week in June, Volodarsky, a Commissar of Petrograd, being the first victim. A committee of inquiry into these assassinations in Petrograd reported that the conspiracy was financed by Englishmen. In Kazan two prominent Bolsheviks were victims of this murder drive. The funerals of these revolutionary martyrs were big public demonstrations. The whole working population of Petrograd turned out to the Volodarsky ceremonies. In every case there is the warm oratory of eulogy; the

## 78 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

pre-revolutionary secret services of the hero are especially recalled. It is pointed out that he died in sight of the promised land; that the cause for which he labored to the final sacrifice will soon be completely won. Much fervid poetry about him appears in the newspapers.

The Bolsheviks came nearest a fall with the Left Socialist-Revolutionary sedition the first part of July. From the accession of the Bolsheviks to power, the Left Social-Revolutionaries had been working hand in hand with them and holding office in the Soviet government. Some of their more influential members came to favor declaring war on Germany, with the idea, especially, of freeing the Ukraine peasants and comrades from the German yoke. Through the plotting of this faction, Mirbach, the German ambassador, was shot and killed in a theater in Moscow. The Bolsheviks might have agreed to make war on Germany in order to purchase recognition and other assistance from the Allies, but, otherwise, they were unalterably for the peace they had so dearly bought from Germany at Brest-Litovsk. Some of the Left Social-Revolutionaries tried to overthrow the Bolsheviks and usurp the power. There was a short party battle in the streets of Moscow and the Bolsheviks triumphed. The Left Social-Revolutionaries split, a pro-Bolshevik section forming a new party.

This was the last serious attempt to set up an anti-Bolshevik government of Socialists within Soviet Russia. The day of the Moderates and Compromise

was past. From now on there were only two factions, Bolsheviks and anti-Bolsheviks. At this time I was traveling over a wide stretch of the country. I left Kazan, July 23, traveling by boat to Nishni-Novgorod, by train to Moscow, Petrograd, Vologda and back to Moscow, all within two weeks. In the course of my travels I felt the political pulse of a large part of Russia. An average pulse, an average of two diametrically opposed pulses, was about the same in all the cities and towns I visited. But there was no person of average pulse. The Left Social-Revolutionary sedition had broken away whatever middle ground there may have been. So it is always with Counter-Revolution. When in the history of any country Conservatism reaches a stage where it is reactionary to the people's dominant will, a clean split is made that is wider than the gulf between Heaven and Hell.

Such was the Russia — with many of its choicest territories lopped off; rent in two by counter-revolution — that the Allies declared war upon in July, 1918. The smoke in which we had been living in Russia cleared away.

For many months no one had known positively which way the Allied diplomacy cat would jump. When I first arrived in Russia in May there were rumors, which have since been proved true, that the Bolsheviks would openly go over to fight on the side of the Allies, if the Allies would recognize them. Raymond Robins had done his utmost to bring this about. With his failure and his departure to Amer-

## 80 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

ica, there was no longer any representative of the Allies left in Russia not really hostile to the Bolsheviks. On the other hand, there were rumors, emanating chiefly from Allied sources, that German influence was strong among the Bolsheviks. The arrival of a German ambassador, Mirbach, with staff and military escort speeded these rumors. On the roof of Mirbach's house was placed a formidable anti-aircraft gun, which the Y. M. C. A. could see from its headquarters and felt a menace. Mirbach's assassination proved that his strong guard and his gun were necessary precautions and not signs of Bolshevik favoritism. Trotsky put well the Bolshevik attitude toward Germany at this time in a speech of his I saw quoted from "Pravda": "The Bolsheviks do not wish an alliance with Germany; no one who understands the Bolsheviks could believe they do; however, if actually they had to choose between Japanese intervention and German intervention, there would be no hesitation; Japan would come in for Japan, and would stay; Germany would come in with no less sinister designs, but the duration of the German occupation would be less certain. The Bolsheviks would hope for changes brought about by internal changes in Germany."

The Allies had really made their decision when they egged on the Czecho-Slovaks to revolt. Bolshevik leaders uncovered the part Allied agents had in this conspiracy, and therefore expected the direct attack by the Allies upon the Soviet Government; they faced war with the Allies with reluctance.

The Allies, themselves, finally cast the die. Allied pronunciamentos appeared late in July setting forth the great concern of the Allied governments for Russian welfare and independence, and their equal concern that the ports of Russia and all the war supplies in Russia should be safe from the Germans — even those in Vladivostok. President Wilson's pronunciamento spoke of Russia with especial tenderness. The Bolsheviks knew then where Mr. Wilson stood; their socialist teachings should have intimated as much to them long before. Wilson was counter-revolution. From now on counter-revolution received from Wilson and the Allies direct support in money, weapons, food and encouragement. The British Government considered counter-revolution even an affair of honor: in due course they decorated Denikin. Work for counter-revolution had recognized merit outside Russia; it gave international good standing.

I arrived at Vologda just in time for the excitement and effect in that north region of the beginning of the hostile movement of the English against Soviet Russia. An official poster appeared all over the city ordering all foreigners to leave within twenty-four hours on penalty of death, as they could not be protected at Vologda. The railroad line to Archangel was closed to all except Red troops. We three Y. M. C. A. men there bought tickets to Moscow at once. The Secretary to the American Embassy was provided a train, and, in spite of his proud American threats, was forced to leave at a certain hour.

82 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

The National City Bank of New York men made protests, but went as ordered, taking their bank.

At Moscow we learned that British and French officials had been arrested. No Americans were arrested, but Russians could no longer put us in a special category of friendly foreigners when it had appeared in their newspapers that Americans and Japanese had agreed on joint intervention in Siberia, and absolute support of the Czech troops there. This report was, of course, true, although I hesitated to believe it at the time. Moreover, the English had already invaded the country at Archangel, and had a little skirmishing with the Red Guards there. French officers had been discovered acting with the Czechs.

These events greatly excited us at the Y. M. C. A. palace, the luxurious home of a Russian ex(?)-millionaire, where we were putting on the finishing touches to packing already planned weeks before. The Y. M. C. A. leaders believed that we were no longer safe as Americans in Soviet Russia; the special distinction previously accorded us would of course now be forfeited. These leaders, however, wished to continue the work of their secretaries trained for Russia; the obvious way to do this was to go across the lines into a congenial anti-Soviet Russia. Besides, there was positive reason for our going thither which it was not necessary to state. I was matter-of-fact enough to protest against going, at least as far as I was personally involved, on the ground that intervention in Russian affairs, at no

matter what military gain, was wrong, especially for America; for by any logical deduction it was counter-revolutionary. The Y. M. C. A. is, however, not an individual with a conscience, but an American social group, and, therefore, speculation as to the righteousness of American intervention was idle to it; to its mind the bigger social group in which it was included could not be wrong.

Accordingly, the whole Y. M. C. A., together with a small group of Y. W. C. A. women, went to Nishni-Novgorod on the Volga River, hoping to get from there into the Czech lines. The Czechs and counter-revolutionaries had just taken Kazan several hundred miles south on the river, and the counter-revolutionary Russians and all foreigners sympathizing with them hoped that Nishni would also soon fall, and then, promptly, Moscow, itself, thus making Russia once more a decent civilized country for them. We spent ten days at Nishni-Novgorod, living first on our Y. M. special cars at the station, and later on two boats at the wharves; the *Kerzenetz*, a steamer lent the Y. M. C. A. by the Soviet Government for a campaign of agricultural education, and another large steamer. It was a delightful house-boat party. We made merry with tea-parties. We attended symphony concerts on the hill, glimpsing sunsets on the way home; the concert was an hour or two earlier than usual, because martial law obtained and every person had to be in his house by ten o'clock.

But the prospect of welcoming victorious Czechs faded day by day; we had to read of constant Bolshevik

## 84 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

vik successes against them on the Volga front. Then, removing the annoyance of making our own decisions, came the order of the American Consul-General for us to return to Moscow. As it happened, we left Nishni to leave Russia, stopping in Moscow only long enough to move our baggage to the special train of first-class sleeping-coaches that was to take all the Americans and some other foreigners out of Russia. At the little bridge marking the boundary between Russia and Finland, the Finnish officials read out our names from our passports one by one. As my name was called and I went with my especial lump in my throat over to the Finnish side, a feeling not quite homesickness but something like it, saddened me. We made the journey through Finland to Stockholm without excitement.

## SMASHING THE LINES

### AN ACCOUNT, LARGELY IMAGINARY, OF BI-ORGANIZATION ACTIVITY

The private car of the Association stood in the railway yard just a little way from the Jaroslavki station at Moscow, swept, windows being washed; the car that had traveled in a wide circle for us: Petrograd, Samara, Archangel! It must be occupied with evidence of immediate use in order to be retained by us; it was a favor to be had only by the enjoying. And "Whiskers," a reverend Mr. Whiskers, and I were detailed to enjoy it. Accordingly we made ourselves comfortable in one of its coupés. To repair or to forestall, sleeplessness, I have forgotten which now, we proceeded to take a nap; but the sun, shining broadly into the coupé, and the flies, which seemed too many for so short a season, combined to defeat our purpose until we counter-attacked by spreading newspapers over our faces and hands; a suggestion of Whiskers — I believe he had slept away many such a summer afternoon before. Whiskers taught me also the value of cheese for such a waiting game. He had bought three pounds of cheese at the famine price of twenty roubles a pound, and in no time at all he had consumed two pounds and I, one.

## 86 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

It was exceedingly young cheese. "There's nothing mature in this country nowadays," Whiskers consolingly remarked; however, I took a fancy to the cheese in just that degree of immaturity; in fact, I learned to like cheese then by liking it young. We passed the night quietly enough; I was not disturbed by the shrill whistling of the shifting engines as I had expected, from previous acquaintance with Russian railroad-yards.

In the morning confusing rumors were brought to us. One was that we should all go out of Russia through Finland. The German representatives would guarantee us safe passage through Finland if we would use what influence we had to help Germans out of Russia at any time. As an alternative, we should travel at once through Siberia and America to France or Northern Russia.

The decision reached in the councils of the chiefs at 26 Smolensky Boulevard was to go to Nishni Novgorod. We could! It was no secret why: we all considered that it was only a matter of days before our friends, the Czechs, were to conquer that fair city.

The baggage! Our impediment! Tons of extras that are the traveler's excuse for being! For handling baggage, a committee was appointed, of which I have been a happy member ever since; Charlie Winthrop, "Senator Charles," being chairman. The Y. W. C. A. were making their escape with us; consequently, there were added to our baggage tons of pots, kettles, and wash-basins — white wash-

basins that in dark Russia served as an emblem of the cleansing power of the American woman. "Bags and kettles to the Nicolaesky Station!" was the order. Thither bags and kettles were transported by robber-baron truck-drivers, unloaded by their majesties, the porters, and then! Then we learned that our cars were to go to the station for Nishni, the Kursky station. To the Kursky station, then, ye barons and kings of transport! At the Kursky station they politely told us that our cars were on the way between the two stations and would arrive probably in four hours. It was ten o'clock at night. So, tram cars having stopped, four of us piled into one droshky, looking more like baggage than men, and returned to "26 Smolensky," to sleep, bedless; on guard at the station were left Hercules Homestead and Fred Ness.

At ten the next morning our cars had not yet arrived at the Kursky. So I became guard of the mountain of our baggage in the main hall of the station; I sat as contentedly as possible on a Y. W. C. A. white bath-tub till four o'clock in the afternoon. As I waited I read in an old *Scribner's* a romantic article about Old Newport, and a salty description of some Maine coast towns in summer; this number had its article on Russia, of course: Stuff and Nonsense manufactured from a few arranged interviews with officers during the Kerensky régime. Hercules Homestead, still on committee duty, amused himself by giving twenty kopecks to every beggar who approached him. The last time I asked his count, he

had distributed twelve roubles among sixty beggars.

The train was to pull out at six. At five-thirty the party, including the "Y" girls, filed through the platform gate, muttering "Amerikanski Messe" to the challenging guard, and marched, loaded with odd scraps of baggage picked up at the last minute, to cars designated by a knowing Russian secretary. And made a mistake! We had taken possession of the wrong cars in the wrong train, the special train for Nishni of Citizen Trotsky and suite, a train de luxe. We had to move our litter to more compressed space. Senator Charles left behind his box of leaflets explaining President Wilson to the Russian people; he said this was not a case of his reputed forgetfulness, but strategy. After a fuss, and the bobbing up of each "Y" girl in turn to inquire, we found the right cars, with name-tags of occupants, written in Pa Sherman's distinctive hand, tacked to each coupé. Who was with whom? "Goods" with "goods," "bads" with "bads"? No, a mistake: two smokers with two non-smokers. Righted, at the suggestion of the non-smokers.

To Nishni Novgorod, the Fair City! By night! A cold, frosty night with a bright moon displaying yellow flat grain fields and silvery birches, and railroad banks covered with dewy wild-flowers. In our little freight-car, tagging our sleepers, was a bourgeois store of flour that caused us uneasiness; somehow, somebody might detach this little car. A guard was appointed, one American, and one Russian, secretary, for each separate hour of the night, in

order to patrol the flour at each stop and also to keep out of our cars the crowds of Russians traveling from station to station. During my watch from three to four, one fellow persisted in getting on our car; the young Russian who was on guard with me maliciously locked him into the vestibule, with the result, so the young Russian told me with huge delight, that at the following station, which happened to be his, the fellow had to extricate himself and baggage through the vestibule-door window. During my watch we passed Vladimir. The walls and buildings of its Kremlin shone in the oblique rays of the rising sun, a magic city, white, white, white!

So, you have us at Nishni, the Y. M.'s and the Y. W.'s, ready for the dash across the Red lines! By compromise, by plain presto-change, or simply by being there when the Czecho-Slovak armies moved into town. Let me narrate that campaign of the two middle weeks of August.

We Americans must not be conspicuous. That was the order-in-council, No. 1. Therefore, only a few of us could go to town at the same time, and only two together. As if we could fool the Bolsheviks! They knew we were in town soon enough and considered our case. They were remarkably courteous. However, we could get no permission to go through the lines to Samara. Messengers were sent to Moscow with letters; we thought it unwise to use the telegraph. Mr. Chicherin, the Bolshevik foreign minister, was sick, but our persistent Mr. Bavis would get the permission from him or would not permit him

## 90 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

to recover health. We would accept a permission to leave Russia in any way; for we were come to that, now. While it was preferable just to fade away into that part of Russia returned to law and order, still it was above all imperative that we disappear altogether from this land of the federated republics.

Feeling was rising against the Americans. The distinction between us and the English was growing slighter and slighter. The girl who sold us flour-candy at a Nishni store called us "enemy." That same morning's yesterday's *Pravda* had announced the landing of the Japanese and the American "Imperialists" at Vladivostok. Members of our party were arrested frequently by some simple-minded Red-Guards for officers. Such a stupid mistake! Who would take our dusty, frowsily-dressed secretaries for bourgeoisie! And then, too, so arbitrarily to misplace us: the American can never consider himself as bourgeois; that's a foreign term and a foreign conception. But you see the class struggle all over Russia was becoming keener and keener. Every town had its committee against counter-revolution. In Petrograd and in Moscow all officers were arrested and many held in confinement. However we looked, we certainly felt smudgy — till we found one of the city's steambaths — but I suppose our faces were too intelligent not to give us away. One evening the whole party was arrested at the station as we were eating dinner, and marched, hatless and coatless — and caneless — to the police station. The committee-head there, after hearing what interpre-

ters had to say for us, pronounced the whole affair an unfortunate misunderstanding, and we fellows pronounced it a grand lark — that is, afterward!

Every such campaign has its determinative episodes. Every such set of days has its own gist for diaries. So, amid the suspense of this fortnight, there began for two in the joint parties, an engrossing, and for all of us, a diverting, series of episodes that, at times, made private interest eclipse international. It was so!

In my coupé, among the four (?) "goods" was one Fred Ness, a Y. M. C. A. secretary of several years' service in China and Russia: plain in appearance, but sound in judgment, full of initiative, and withal comparatively open-minded. One quickly felt there was a lack of savor in him; perhaps it was that by going on Y. M. C. A. service to China in his early twenties he had lost touch with the tang of the social life of men and women of his own age. His slang was arrested at the college-graduate period. It was, you might say, academic. He hadn't been disillusioned in the microscopic world of money and theater-going, of book-talk and women — many women; he was drafted into the macrocosm of "China for the world!" Any man of twenty would be dwarfed by such large aims.

Fred by accident came to eat with the Y girls in their car. He happened to pass through at dinner-time one day and exclaimed "ah!" at the rice pudding; after that he ate four meals and his teas there every day. There also he found several other

Y. M.'s, attracted by some convenience or other. And already the pairing had begun. It happens so in any society that holds together a week, or in a house-party over a week-end. What so natural that it should happen when a group of educated young Americans of both sexes meet on national service abroad! What better way to forget Trotsky and the orders of "a state of siege"!

Fred was in siege. It was the black-haired Elise that first he noticed, then admired, then acquired as a habit. Elise was a woman who could travel over a whole continent with only a knapsack, a new kind of woman to Fred. He didn't know that while he had been apart from women in his American university and in China, the woods were becoming full of such trim women, women without those loose ends that his sisters and female cousins exhibited. Elise was firm and quick to make clean, ample plans of action. She bought curios and pictures with talkativeness. She could describe a little shop in an off-street, so that a man would hunt it out the next morning for himself, or, if he understood woman's way of inviting, would request the lady to conduct him, herself, to the spot. And Elise knew French and German well enough to make the learning of Russian by the comparative method seem easy and entertaining to a fellow — any way is easier than learning by a book! Furthermore, Elise was, without doubt, a woman: uncertain, full of interesting little wishes, and always sympathetic toward Fred's little ways of thinking. She understood why he had tried foreign serv-

ice, just during those formative years, too; it was better than the crude ambition to make money in New York or Chicago.

Fred's warm social life was only a little more lively than that of the rest of us up there at Nishni. Miss Sayles, an old-maid at twenty-four, and Miss Morton of the thick eyeglasses, far less an old-maid at thirty-nine, also attracted "regulars," but for all we might conjecture, these might be only flirtations. Besides, to be sure, there was Mr. Niles who was doubtless engaged to Miss Tibbetts, but his was one of those unromantic cases of mild propinquity that can never make deep gossip; everybody simply said: "Why don't they announce it, so we can have a party, so we can be sentimental about it, even if they, themselves, aren't."

We all "got pretty thick." Within thirty-six hours we were calling each other by first-names. Our social life wasn't the less cool, nor the less lively, that we were living on a boat! You see we were thrown out of our special cars on Track No. 6 in the railroad yard. Some railroad commissar sent word by a saucy deputy that our railroad cars were not given us for hotels, and later we received a handsome rent-bill covering the days we had lived in the cars. Then John Daly shrewdly engaged for our occupation one of the squadron of boats tied up in enforced idleness at the Volga wharfs. It was an old fellow, used of late only in the local traffic, full of small life — they called for my last can of Thomson's powder (buy

## 94 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

Thomson's, it is the deadliest kind!). On this boat our parties were divided into two groups. I was quartered in second-class, where were all the Y girls. The men at the other end were, strange to say, better fed: they had among them a born cook; his menus comprehended all the requisite food values, and better still, double the number of necessary calories. But we on our end of the old tub suffered no lack! We also had griddle cakes, a real pie, American puddings; and we alone had a genuine double-decker, chocolate frosted-cake. The Russian secretaries called this *Mazurka*, a Polish concoction; however I am certain that, though generally speaking the Russian cooking may excel ours, they don't know how to bake anything quite like a Yankee frosted-cake. Elise made the frosting, Fred scraped the frosting-dish! Such were his privileges during those days when we were all privileged to live high, higher than we had lived since we left home. And it didn't cost us a great deal, only about fifteen roubles (\$1.80) per day.

You can imagine what parties we had: tea parties, reading parties, Russian-study parties, marketing parties! The tea parties were for the small sets of pairs, of from four to six persons. Passing by cabin doors, one could catch a glimpse of all the good things; jam, honey, butter, sugar and white bread! Now you must know that all these articles are at the present time in Russia more rare and more to be desired than ancient wines. The opening of a pot of jam, jam in which sugar is mixed as it used to be

in the old pre-famine days, is attended by much ceremony and much watering of the mouth. I sat in at one reading party. A simple translated story of Tolstoy's was read by one of the wits, by the fellow who amused himself editing a daily nonsense-sheet and writing festive poems. I seated myself near the sugar-bowl, and in the tense moments of the narration — some parts of the story were very touching! — I smuggled lump after lump of sugar into my tea, tea so strong that one couldn't see the lump dissolve in it! All these folks are indeed fond of Tolstoy; every one has him along; he survives each paring of baggage.

This military adventure of ours, this attempt to break through the crumbling (?) lines of the Bolsheviks was a blithesome time, and to give it up, brought us, as day-to-day mortals, real sorrow. But it was a failure, at least as a short-time proposition. We all believed that sooner or later there would be another power in Nishni Novgorod than the Bolsheviks, but we couldn't await that day. The Bolsheviks were roguishly winning little victories down the river. Our good consul-general insisted that we come to Moscow: Moscow was a better point of departure! As we assembled for a religious service, Sunday morning, August 25th, in the first-class saloon, our leader remarked how it seemed that all our important movements in Russia had had to be made on Sunday; telegrams were read; there was no case even for argument about alternatives; so we should try to make the evening train for Moscow if permissions from the

## 96 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

Nishni authorities could be obtained during the day; there was no time for the religious service; the heavy baggage must be ready within an hour; a small tug would pull alongside for it.

But in the face of this doom, we in second-class continued our revels. That was the day of the frosted-cake. There were "last teas" in the afternoon. At six o'clock word came that the light baggage must be down instantly for the droshkies. This news occasioned a scramble! We "downed" hot cocoa and white bread and jam, and, helter-skelter, packed kettles and pans, camp chairs and cooking-dishes. We must not leave behind the family broom; our broom had been a find; it's only brushes they use in Russia. Other household essentials to be sure to pack were the fool maimed doll and our salt and pepper knick-knacks, Napoleon and Joseph, table gods. Another word came! The droshkies will not come for us; they fear the early closing-hour in the state of siege. A catastrophe, indeed! A big pile of our baggage lay at the wharf beside the boat. The station was three miles distant. But large promises brought first one droshky and then another. Meantime, the members of the party hurried off to the station, some riding and some shank's-mare, carrying along as much of their own personal belongings as bearable. I was one of the victims who walked, carrying my rucksack on my back, with teapot and water-bottle tied to it; a typewriter, walking stick, and small traveling-bag in one hand; and on my shoulder balancing a sheet, which contained

all the traveling equipment of Lena, a sweet little Russian domestic attached to the Y. W. C. A. Lena was trotting along beside me, and trying to keep up with my long strides, and saying "Nicheva," which translated in this case, might mean: "there is no hurry!"

Fred and Elise were the last to go. Fred was that magnanimous he would not leave the burning deck. And Elise was as magnanimous as Fred! In a broken caravan, Y. M.'s and Y. W.'s, manservants and maidservants, goods and chattels,— all reached the station in time, except Fred and Elise. They, faithful ones, saw the last scraps of that pile of baggage on a droshky, including the maimed doll, and Napoleon and Joseph, but there was no room remaining for them to ride. They waited too long for another droshky and missed the train. They were the only Americans left in the city. They hadn't a piece of baggage between them; and, what was a more serious inconvenience, neither spoke more than traveler's Russian.

Of course Fred and Elise showed signs of despair, but the despair of the one melting into the despair of the other brought to both hope, courage, even joy! Indeed, their misfortune might be regarded as a stroke of luck; Fred probably thinks he would never have won his fair Elise without such a turn of events: I suppose Elise has persuaded him of that by now.

They went back to the boat, as if there was no other place to go to. Fred borrowed blankets from

## 98 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

the caretaker there, and he made up a bed in the second-class, and she in the first-class, at opposite ends of the boat. I can imagine that the common danger did not take the edge off the usual ardor of their "spooning," as they walked this night on top the boat in the moonlight. This night, there was no one below for their footsteps to disturb, provoking later reference.

In the morning they found a Russian formerly in the service of the Association. He helped them to get united in a Bolshevik marriage. As you may guess, this consisted of the barest declarations before a magistrate. It is hard to believe that Fred would consent to such an outlandish thing. It shows how much Fred had changed; he had indeed caught up with the times! Having gone that much off the beaten track, he did not go directly back; having followed one bypath at random, he followed another!

Jokingly, several of us had discussed while at Nishni the feasibility of walking over to the Czech lines. Fred had not been one of these several: this wasn't exactly his kind of humor. But now in all reality these newly-weds undertook the "walking trip." They might have thought to overtake us at Moscow or Petrograd. They could have done so. But I suppose they had ceased to think of us. Probably they were glad to be rid of us; we had poked such fun at them; as people will poke fun at lovers.

The pair had roubles enough between them; Fred, a good many, I think. They bought two knapsacks

and light provisions and set out. From village to village they progressed, by hired conveyances where possible. They bought food and slept, as it was most convenient. I suppose they did not care how long or how difficult their journey was — why worry away a honeymoon?

It was inevitable that they should become recognized as foreigners. Several Bolshevik soldiers were sent to arrest them. Luckily the Bolshevik in charge was an officer of the old army, and instead of arresting them, he actually put them across the lines. The Red Army is full of such fellows, men serving for a livelihood, or serving to aid at the proper moment in the counter-revolution. I have every reason to believe that there are wide-spread plots to restore a more or less conservative government, and that the conspirators are putting their men in positions where they can forward the counter-revolution from inside the Bolshevik army, itself! Such a pseudo-Bolshevik was the commissar in re Fred Ness and wife! And this same fellow coming on some mission intrusted to him by the Proletarian leaders, to Petrograd, while we were detained there before being granted permission to leave Russia via Finland — told a diplomat on our train, and the diplomat told us, this termination or climax, of the story of Fred and Elise. This seems to me one of the most remarkable things I have known in Russia. For I think I know the characters of Fred and Elise, and they acted contrary to their characters: they acted like

## 100 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

genuine Russians. The fact remains that they alone of the lot of us did smash the lines and are now safely on the other side, already giving succor to our allies, while we travel half-way round the world to be in a position to do so.

## SUNLESS KOLA

While we were comforting and regaling ourselves in Stockholm, after getting out of Soviet Russia, news came that our party of American Y. M. C. A. war secretaries was to go to North Russia in the vicinity of Archangel or Murmansk. Immediately I saw in prospect a house of ice and a hibernating life like that of an Eskimo. What else could one expect two hundred miles north of the Arctic Circle! And never was this particular error of my geographical imagination entirely corrected till a year later when, outside Russia altogether, I came across a comparative table of Russian temperatures and learned that the average winter temperature of Archangel was only a fraction of a degree colder than that of Kazan a thousand miles to the south; moreover, at Kola, where I spent my winter, our proximity to the gulf-stream must have raised our average temperature several degrees above that of Archangel.

On the way to our destined hibernation, Birkhaug and I were diverted for three weeks to the Norwegian town of Kirkenes at the northern terminus of the coast-line steamers. A large majority of the population of Kirkenes were workers for a German-owned iron mine that during the war was being

worked only at a minimum rate. The spirit of that town was modern, in spite of its being at a land's-end: it was a world unto itself, and distinctly a labor world. The miners had their own newspaper, co-operative store, and club. The editor of their socialist newspaper was their preacher and legislator. In a funeral sermon over the body of a young man from the town who had been one of the many victims of an epidemic raging at a camp among those doing their two years of military service, this editor made a violent attack on military conscription. All of this violent preacher's flock were Bolshevik Socialists; there were many such flocks in Norway, I was led to believe. One of the few *ladies* in the place informed me in a tone of horror that all the housemaids in Norway belonged to a union.

That bleak town nestled in a hollow among high rocks jutting into the Arctic Sea had a physical fascination for me. I roamed the high rocks often. Just those cliffs, the sea, and the sunshine provided for me great wild beauty; such as I had only imagined before; it helped me to understand what fed the imagination of Björnson in the creation of those imperishable stories of his. There was one small meadow in the place, and some of the vegetable gardens, though frosted, were still green in October.

These weeks among the desolate rocks, and among the hardy, Bolshevik Norwegians prepared me for the bleakness of North Russia and for the simple, kindly Russian folks of Kola, much gayer than their Norwegian brethren across the border. Villagers

passing along the main wooden sidewalk of Kola were never too cold to stop for a greeting, usually cheerful and often ample. For two months those Russians lived absolutely without sight of the sun, and some days with the moon yellow at midday. In such a country a sunny face has its value.

Kola, nine miles from Murmansk, at the end of Kola Bay, under Telegraph Hill, was, before the advent of the railroad and the growth of Murmansk, the port town of the region, and what trading the sparse population needed was effected here, chiefly with Norwegians. It was this town a British fleet attacked during the Crimean War. Townspeople will point to you to-day signs of the damage done the village by that bombardment.

British troops then, 1918-1919, were again at Kola; in coats of a different color, but with the same British hearts beating underneath; and British coat and heart aroused, no doubt, the same feelings in the native population of 1850 as I witnessed aroused seventy years later. At the village of Kola was the British (and Allied) headquarters of the northern half of the Murmansk military district. Here were stationed a regiment or two of British troops, and a full battalion of Italians. Practically all the soldiers were quartered in hastily-erected barracks at Kola Station, two miles from the village.

The presence of such a host of foreign visitors made me feel less distant from the moving world of humanity, less as if connected with a party for polar exploration. Life moved fast in Kola, for Kola.

Wireless messages from the western front, and later from Paris, were received daily. We knew critical news as soon as Londoners, but we had to wait from three to four weeks for London newspapers, to know those small straws of information that show the way the wind is blowing, and without which critical news loses force and meaning. We learned, for example, that the Republicans had captured the American Congressional elections, but we couldn't know why: whether it meant Wilson had grown unpopular, that the war was unpopular, or that a domestic policy had discredited the administration. News came of the overwhelming defeat of the Independent-Liberal and Labor parties in England, but the election figures told no story. And it is story, after all, that makes political facts interesting, not the facts themselves. People who read only political headlines in their newspapers, naturally cannot enjoy the game of politics, nor, in the long run—if you will pardon an American for saying so—can they vote intelligently.

The news of the armistice brought the same personal tremors in Kola that it brought in London or New York, though our public demonstration of our feelings of relief was quite humble. Kola's celebration and mine happened November 12, according to orders from headquarters, in this way. At ten the troops marched behind the excellent band of the Italians through the village, with a review in front of the church. I had a Stars and Stripes packed at the bottom of one of 50 unpacked parcels, and by

the time, after a tearing search, I had guessed the right parcel, it was too late to have it present at the review; but, brought to the light, it served, at any rate, to proclaim Americanism to the village, being hung on a pole atop a high fence, just beneath,—as was right and fitting—my landlord's Russian flag. There was a *Te Deum* at the church, a thanksgiving for the advent of peace, or, at least, of the ceasing of formal warfare. Then for four solid hours, in a lusty and a carefree Russian way, the church bells were rung. I saw the boys, five or six, up there in the belfry, dressed in warm hats and mittens, pulling the tongues of the bells with ropes.

Bells of Russia!  
Flute, drum and fiddle.  
Staccato and succulent,  
Sweet and somnolent,  
And always musical:  
Most melodious bells of gay-sad Russia!

That church tower, even when silent as well, rang out a message of its own. On top of it was a huge green dome, surmounted by a small gilded dome and gilded rod. These colors made warm the landscape for miles around, and the white of the church's high walls was a rallying point for the bright colors of the other buildings of the village to cluster about. The C. O. (commanding officer) invited some Russian dignitary to lunch, and chatted with him decorously in Russian (here was one English officer who could speak, and speak well, the native language). This

representative native had plenty of beard, which appeared most flourishing when he raised a glass of the mess's best whiskey to his lips. He wore proudly a decent suit of black clothes that did not allow for his corpulence, and he was as gracious and ceremonious as a Russian may be. I suppose the C. O. was delineating what a future lies in store for Russia when order finally comes in its affairs.

In the afternoon I followed a beckoning white road into the hills. I passed English soldiers at a game of football, beating their arms to keep warm as they ran. A long stretch of water, steely-blue, ran up out of sight among the hills where the sun was setting. I returned through the village streets. The houses, generally built of hewn logs, look like blockhouses; they have little windows, the lines of many of them are aslant; and there is usually a high board fence with a wide gate, enclosing their yards. Women in the thinnest clothes and no stockings were crossing the yards. Mischievous-looking children were playing at the street-corners. At a shrine down on the peninsula-end, at the head of the village, where there are a large wooden cross, six feet high, under a wooden canopy, and a tiny chapel with two bells hung outside, I met a group of boys playing. They teased me for cigarettes. I asked them what the white cross was for. They said it was *Boog* (God). They spoke neither seriously nor mockingly.

In the evening was a dinner at Kola Station for the Allied officers and their guests. All the Allies

were toasted in turn. For Russia, spoke up Engineer Kozevnekoff, thereafter nicknamed "The Father of Humanity," urging international fraternity, and so forth! "Bas les Boshes! Bas les Boshes!" came the cry, quite good-naturedly, from all the diners. The Father of Humanity was outvoted in this league of nations; and giving an unexpected brotherly kiss to Padre Rawson, he accepted with resignation the positive check his extreme humanitarianism had received.

Old Kozevnekoff had a witty way of putting his points that entitled him to considerable license. Here are instances of his wit; the man is worth the digression. He was having tea with the machine gun officers one day and took an especial liking to the corn syrup. "Let me try a combination," he exclaimed, his wolfish eyes twinkling. And he was permitted to spread first butter, then jam, then syrup, on a Huntley & Palmer biscuit. Raising it before the mess in the candle-light, he made his point with deliberate precision. "See here the butter, the jam, the syrup on this biscuit — the four Allies, three on the back of the biggest (Russia)!" Another day he was inquiring of some Y. M. C. A. secretaries if the Russian civilians might buy at their canteens. "Sorry, no!" they replied with careful concern; "we are forbidden to sell except to soldiers." "And may the Russian soldiers buy from you?" he inquired further. "Certainly, the Russian soldiers will be treated exactly as the other Allied troops."

"Then," commented Kozevnekoff, briefly, "it will be necessary for the civilian to be acquainted with a Russian soldier!"

After dinner, as the strange end to the day of celebration, came the evening telegram sheet with the news that the old German government had been completely overturned and that a new cabinet had been formed of three Majority and three Independent Socialists. This news might raise questions in the imaginative mind. Such things, it was possible, might affect vitally that very victory we had just celebrated. But such questioning, if there were any, — perhaps some minds cannot conceive of any revolution until it is an accomplished fact! — held no serious place in the minds of the officers of the garrison, then jubilant and far from sober. The next day and the next day following, their minds were occupied, on the one hand, with matters of administrative detail, and, on the other, with the day's sport or the week's dance.

That was an ideal country for skiing. Officers went about their tasks on skis; they made the journey to Murmansk that way. A mobile column, calling for the enlistment of sportsmen, was trained to be of military service on skis.

The town boys seemed most proficient in the sport. Their skis were home-made, often as rude as barrel staves, and one ski seemed to be as good as two. They would also toboggan downhill on every description of a box. Their swiftest way of getting about town was on skates.

The prize stunt was to obtain the chance to drive to Rustikent by reindeer teams. That was rapid travel, indeed; scaling the sides of steep hills and crossing country where roads could never be. It is a pretty sight to see a team of reindeer swinging along in open country; it is a thrilling experience to be so carried. The reindeer will travel 24 hours at a stretch without rest or food. The caryosas in which persons are carried for such a cross-country journey are in size and appearance like a light boat; several are tied together, and are pulled in a string by a team of several animals. Often one of the caryosas is caught by a tree or bush and broken off from the team; often this light carriage is tipped over with all its contents. On the Rustikent trip, the whole party is put up on one night in a small shack already densely populated with a native family or two; if properly equipped, it may bivouac in the snow. When after a journey of two or three days the traveler arrives at Rustikent, he is entertained by the widowed Queen of the Lapps, who wears the most exquisite furs, and who makes him the most liberal presents (to be returned, of course, with presents of greater value in her eyes). For this northern queen is wealthy: she owns many herds of reindeer; her rule, as the rule of a modern sovereign should be, is based upon economic supremacy. But the foreign pilgrims, no matter of what rank, are given the honor of playing cards with her, and following such intimacies are permitted before departure to put her on their kodak films in her most queenly furs. In Rus-

## 110 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

tikent, the Lapp capital, are 1500 people in winter. These people would give the most valuable furs, boots, and slippers for small value in the food or luxuries of foreign pilgrims, and, no doubt, considered the exchange highly advantageous to themselves. The English officers, however, who were dealing regularly with them in an official way, tried to fix a fair rate of exchange upon a money basis.

I spent most of my time indoors, where my work was. Our Y. M. C. A. was quartered in a fine looking log house of one story, built high from the ground. The canteen occupied the two spacious rooms on front; here we permitted to meet in the daytime some of the classes of the village school driven from their own building because of its requisition. Besides the two front rooms, we had a small class- room, and a kitchen, where we made the canteen drinks and also held classes, in a pinch; and I had a comfortable room there, kept warm by a large Russian oven stove, constructed on the principle of preserved heat; a fire was built in it once every 24 hours in the coldest weather; and then when the fire was down to embers, the stove was closed off from the chimney, thus shutting the heat in the stove. The canteen's greatest attraction was a gramophone and set of records, both far better than the average, which Tom, Dick and Harry ran to his own liking; with the consequence that the machine often went on a strike; fortunately, however, there was always some Tom about to mend it. At the canteen counter we sold when we had them, coffee, biscuits (Huntley &

Palmer's sweet biscuits), soap, soup, candles, cigarettes, and darning cotton. Our supplies were so limited and so spasmodically forwarded that we could permit no soldier to purchase at one time more than a half packet of biscuits, one packet of cigarettes, or one cake of soap. Even if we had had the stock of a Wanamaker's, we should have sold it out too quickly: the soldiers had no other place to spend their money.

My especial part of the divided Y. M. C. A. labor of the Kola district was the direction of the educational classes at the village and at the station. The Russian inhabitants flocked to our school and took what it offered greedily, but the soldiers had, after a taste, their own opinion about the excitement of learning Russian. The officers stuck to study more resolutely, particularly where the teacher was a representative of Russia's keen young women. All the feverish activity about these novel classes of ours appears to me now but an idle flourish. Yet hidden currents in the camp life were touched by this educational effervescence, and while it gave these currents no permanent outlet, it quickened them a little and kept them moving, perhaps to find a worthy outlet later in peace days. Trivial education is better than none at all. At least, it makes for educational appearances, and these in turn make an environment in which serious educational activity may originate.

The waters of social life at Kola were more deeply stirred. Here we had the willing assistance of those never-to-be-forgotten native young women — barishnas. They did their bit at the officers' parties; they

## 112 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

came out in smaller, but still in loyal, numbers at the dances for soldiers. The York regiment operated a vaudeville circuit along the line of the railroad in the occupied area, and there was intense competition for membership in the party, for it meant a trip down the line in the special concert train and relief from all other duties. When these entertainers gave one of their performances at Kola, the Italian section of the audience was so captivated by the appearance of one of the performers taking the part of a nurse that several of them crowded about the stage door during the intermission to serenade her. Every one was involved sooner or later in an extemporeaneous concert; it did not matter what he did; only he had to have a part. The Roman Catholic Padre borrowed the use of the canteen for a social gathering of his flock one Sunday afternoon, and it was philosophically amusing to see how bravely each soldier, as he was called up in turn, did his bit; although probably these efforts cost some of them as great torture as I knew it was causing some of their auditors.

Special pains were taken by the junior officers to keep their seniors entertained, above all, the General. Serafima — a bright-eyed, sweetly-petite graduate of the Archangel Gymnasium, who wore an adorable coat of soft, reddish-brown young reindeer skin, with hat to match,— was engaged to give the General expert advice on matters pertaining to the Russian language (the General was not the C. O. who had the representative Russian citizen to lunch in

celebration of the armistice). Petrozavodsk Marusa, a handsome though pouty girl of only sixteen such winters, was had to headquarters dinner, under the chaperonage of her rather bibulous parents — a necessary evil; great use was found, also, for Bolshevik Mary, in spite of her suspiciously precise German, for, although she was a large enough woman to shake the floor of some houses at small Russian dances, she possessed, indubitably, grace in her steps, and, probably, music in her soul, with which to beguile his sir-ship, the General, at the officers' dances.

The Kola I knew was socially a contrast to the labor-society of Kirkenes, Norway. Bolshevik-Society had vanished from Kola a few months before my arrival, and during my stay only Bourgeoisie-Society flourished, guided and purified by the several leading families. The two richest men in Kola were merchants. The richest, Kukin, had made his money in Norwegian trade. In Czarist days, as he boasted, he had entertained Petrograd friends in his house. Now his outstanding, well-built house had been requisitioned for headquarters, and Lady Kukin expressed with tears in her eyes her rage at seeing the damage her home suffered by occupation of English officers. I felt the malicious prompting to ask her if she had prospered better than this during Bolshevik days — if she hadn't lost use of her house, in large part, if not altogether. At Murmansk, the great lady of the town was the widow of the admiral whose sailors had murdered him in the harbor. She mourned her husband profoundly. She declared to

me that she should always, till her death, live in Murmansk — the scene of his last tragic days and his burial place. She was indeed a beautiful, accomplished, and haughty person. Nevertheless financial embarrassments compelled her to tutor Allied officers in languages; and what a tang her reluctance must have given at every lesson to the British or French conqueror-student!

Christmas provided an excuse for heightened sociality. The Russian Christmas, by coming according to the church calendar thirteen days after ours, made possible a prolonged holiday festivity and a thorough exchange of holiday courtesies. We arranged our big party for Christmas night. The hall chosen for this gala occasion had the insalubrious name, "The Horse Barns," owing to the fact that French cavalry had been quartered there the previous summer. The circumstance, so a trusty Russian acquaintance informed me, somewhat handicapped us at the start; but it was still possible to make the party a success, he said, by a judicious issue of the invitations; if, however, one of the village families not considered "nice" were invited, the "nice" people would hear of it and not come. One further caution: if the Russians saw so much as one of their hosts beginning to be drunk, they would immediately be escorting their daughters to the coat room. Consequently, on Christmas evening our committee were waiting in the festooned "Horse Barns" very nervously for the first guests. These appeared, finally, with disarming smiles, Captain Helmholtz and his

wife, German-Russian refugees from Riga — our principal guests. At that moment a group of three or four Tommies who had not refused their Christmas rum ration, nor any of the liquor extras for the day, spontaneously decided to dance a jig noisily in a corner lighted with a large festive candelabrum. They executed their decision instantly. Swiftly, as if on wings, Lieutenant Bull of the Committee moved across the hall and quieted this inopportune, and, as it turned out, this isolated, case of super-abundance of spirits; but, too late! Captain Helmholtz and family had vanished. Worse luck, they met other members of the gentry just outside and gave them reason for retracing their steps. Then, rather than let our whole party go by default, we admitted some of the villagers not so "nice" who were loitering shamelessly about the building.

The Russians began their "Rojestvo" at three A. M. with the ringing of the church bells and a service. I enjoyed the bells only — in bed! I was awakened a few hours later by a peculiar sound that seemed at first like the music of bag-pipes. It was Christmas music sung by several children in the rooms of my landlord. They soon came into my room, faced my icon, an image such as all good Russians hang high up in a corner of every room, and sang, bowing to the icon, and twirling a little wheel, made to represent the Star of the East, and decorated with bright bands of paper and pictures of the old Emperor and Empress. Later in the morning I called on some of the villagers. I found

them all dressed in their best clothes, abjuring all work whatsoever, and entertaining their kinsfolk and friends around the tea table. Their cakes, of many kinds, were made from sugar saved from rations over a long period, and, in the houses of the rich, of sugar bought privately from Allied sources. Their Christmas was not done up in any hurry. There were the first, the second, the third, the fourth days — clear, unadulterated holidays! On the third day, the day after Christmas, came the big fête for the children of the village, held that year in the large hall of the Y. M. C. A. building at Kola Station; in the evening was a spectacle (Russian play), and from midnight to seven in the morning was a grand ball. All the dances at this time of the year are masquerades. A dozen or two masked friends will call on you at any hour of the night and request the pleasure of dancing in your house. They resemble bears, donkeys, fish, brigands and cut-throats. You ask if they are good people. They reply they are. They dance violently and recklessly — as the creatures they resemble might disport themselves; you give them to eat and to drink; they move on to another house. The tree (Yolka) is the important thing for grown-ups as well as for children. I saw several men bringing their tree from the hillside on the First Day of Christmas. This same day they also decorate it. On the following day, after the Christmas morning service, they light it with the tiny church candles they have brought home with them. It remains by law for two weeks; the children pray

clamorously to have it remain longer, and to the joy of all it remains another week.

So Christmas is over, the big holiday of the year; and none too important in sunless Kola, as a means of keeping the children and the grown-ups happy in the dark winter months. Everybody seemed sorry to have Christmas all over; there came no sigh of relief to these folks at the end of their holiday engagements, as comes to us who plan Christmas more ambitiously. Their efforts for Christmas are natural; they take time to enjoy their Christmas. The Allied military control would not allow the Russians working for them to take off their usual number of days to celebrate on; thus was the corruption of civilization felt that Christmas at Kola. But the chief Christmas customs of the people were observed in spite of the presence of a higher civilization. I doubt if any Czar or any Lenin could suddenly obliterate these. Next Christmas may be a Bolshevik Christmas in Kola, but it will differ little from the one I saw there. Such holiday customs of the people will prevail, pretty much unchanged, for some time to come, whoever makes the decrees at Moscow. A month after Christmas will come a week when all feast and eat bleenies (griddle cakes). Then will come Lent, when all religious Russians fast rigidly. There will come in its turn the Day of the Baptism when the priest, followed by the whole village, will take the chief icon of the church along a path marked by cut fir trees, to the river, and here, under a canopy specially erected,

## 118 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

the priest will dip the icon through a hole that has been cut in the ice, into the running water — all as a symbol of renewing life, of the perennial washing away of the old.

So every year Russia shakes off her old sins, and, in hope, in freshness, looks to the future. Habits of faith in the Russian people like this one will never be rooted out. Russia *will be* clean some day. And then may she help some of the other people who cling more fondly to their past, and consequently have less faith in their power to renew themselves.

## JOHN BULL IN NORTH RUSSIA

Arctic Russia was a strange country for twenty thousand or more English soldiers to be set down in; but it was only a short time before they had made the place theirs. Too lazy to learn Russian, they made themselves understood with interpreters. To lend dignity to this indirect communication the interpreters were made sergeants. I knew three privates who obtained stripes in this way. I saw half a village evacuated for troops, and to increase the accommodations, rows of wooden shacks with walls of two thicknesses filled with dirt, hastily built. Stoves were brought in, bunks built. Orders were issued to keep everything and everybody sanitary. So many men were detached for the fuel service, so many for the water service. My Y. M. C. A. hut in Kola village was furnished promptly with wood and water as one of the army institutions. The water-man's sled covered with ice rapidly forming as the water spilled over the side of the barrel, came creaking to our back door about nine in the morning.

The officers were a cheerful lot of fellows, all fit. As soon as they arrived in the place, they were thinking of shooting and skiing. There wasn't much game in our immediate vicinity, but officers coming new to the place would go out with their guns some

morning to make sure of this fact. Skiing remained excellent all winter. Little snow fell, but this never melted once till April. Although two hundred miles within the Arctic Circle, thanks to the influence of the Gulf Stream, the average temperature, Fahrenheit, was above zero, and Kola Bay always lay before us as an unfrozen feature of the place. The officers often went back and forth on skis between Kola Station and the village, army headquarters. They wore sweaters under their tunics, a long woolen scarf, a handsome fur hat, but generally no overcoat. Their buttons, belt, and boots glistened. They should have impressed the population. They did outclass the Italian officers who in appearance are not easy to distinguish from their soldiers.

The chief task of the officers, up there 500 miles from the front, was to look after their men. This they did well, for the most part. They were solicitous, too, that Tommy should have his entertainment; otherwise he might become discontented. At first some C. O.'s were lukewarm, if not hostile, to the efforts of the Y. M. C. A., but in time the sort of service rendered by the Y. M. C. A. came to be appreciated; so much so, in fact, that a welfare officer was appointed for the district and attached to the general staff.

The evenings were long, especially so to the officers, who did not have to rise early. In midwinter lamps were lighted from three to four o'clock. Tea came at four-thirty; a good dinner, with abundant liquor, at seven-thirty, prepared by tested soldier-cooks.

The officer messes could procure certain extras from the Army Service Corps such as plum pudding, canned vegetables and fruits. After dinner was a game of cards or conversation enlivened with a gramophone. The choice of the evening's diversion lay with the C. O. (commanding officer). If he wished to play bridge, bridge it was; if he preferred to go out skiing in view of the northern lights or the northern moonlight, with the Russian women, his officers must accompany him.

Occasionally there was a dance for officers at Kola Station in the Y. M. C. A.'s huge building, erected by aid of the soldiers, and kept warm by eight brick ovens. At first these dances were held on Sunday evening, following the Russian customs, but when the Yorks came into camp, their chaplain put his foot down and declared the Russians should observe Sunday in our way, not we in theirs. The Italians outshone the English in dancing; they danced with each other if there were not girls enough to go round; few of the English danced. The most memorable of these affairs was the masquerade party after the Russian Christmas celebrations were over, when the inhabitants appeared in clever disguises and in their merriest mood. Captain ~~Paxt~~ was so enthralled by one of the disguised fair ones that he took her to his shack between dances and offered her chocolate, the greatest luxury to the Russian ladies. But when he gallantly tried to kiss her, she unmasked and showed herself a soft-voiced boy of nineteen.

These Englishmen talked chiefly about their war

experiences in France. They were not particularly concerned to know why the government was keeping them in Russia after the armistice. One officer, irritated at the time upon receiving news that his battalion should move on as reënforcements to Archangel, exclaimed: "This expedition is nothing but a capitalists' scheme to get a hand on the mines of Russia" (as it happens there are rich mineral deposits all untouched in the hills around Murmansk). This remark came more or less off the top of the brain, but the following remark of another officer was well considered: "Of course I know very well what we are here for. I, as an English officer, am here in the interest of England, in the interest of England's prosperity. For I am a regular-army man: we cannot have an army without money, and we as a nation cannot have money without an army to fight for it." "But," I asked, "do you believe the Italians and French are here also in the financial interest of their countries?" "Certainly," he responded. "And how about the Americans?" I put the question; "don't you believe in the sincerity of Wilson with his fourteen points?" "Very likely he is sincere," replied the officer; "perhaps our Lloyd-George is sincere also, but, when all is said, we know our politicians are only the tools of our business men, the real rulers." There was no beating about the bush with this man, no phrase-making. He, like many others, believed that the way to settle the Russian question was by force.

They considered the Russian too weak to decide

his own destinies. This notion that certain people are born without capacity for self-government is not a stock idea of English military men alone. Mr. Dillon, a well-known English writer about Russia, has written a book of 700 pages to prove that the Russian is not fit for self-government. I had this Mr. Dillon quoted to me. He was a convenient authority at the moment. Convenient authorities have been found to prove the Irish, the Indians, the Egyptians unfit for self-government.

They told me the Russian was no fighter, that that fact was made clear in the war. They told me the Italians were cowards. They reported that one of the American regiments at Archangel was below par because made up of Detroit immigrants, and that for this reason the English at Murmansk were obliged to send over reinforcements to Archangel.

There were four thousand Italians at the Kola camp under a major of their own, but subject to suggestions of the English C. O. Only one English C. O. was ever really successful in maintaining the *entente cordiale* with them. His secret as told to one of his subalterns was this: "I find it best to give way in all small matters, and in any important matter the Italians will be rather happy than not in seeing my way of looking at it."

Tommy rose above his environment almost as heartily and as irrepressibly as his officer. The soldiers were getting enough to eat that winter, though they told me that the previous summer they were working hard on less than half rations. The

## 124 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

British army rations were uniformly good. The cereal, bacon, jam and cheese were never an inferior article. By Christmas, all the winter clothing for the troops had arrived. Their high white hats faced with black fur were imposing. Every soldier was required to wear the Shackleton arctic boots, but the warmest foot-wear for that climate to my thinking were *valenki*, the felt boots worn by the inhabitants. Tommy had almost as little use for the Russian as his officer. His chief relation to the natives was to "skolko," the Russian term meaning "how much." In the beginning a brisk trade sprang up in cigarettes and rum, the Russians' supply of these articles being just what they could obtain from the army. The evil increased till made the subject of an army order threatening "skolkoers" with loss of leave to England (there had been no leave up to that time).

The men were thinking of England much more than of Russia. Mail day was the big day; then there was something more pleasant than routine to think about. Everybody wanted to go home. For this reason, and for any other imaginable, as always where John Bull plants himself, the men groused (*i. e.*, complained) and groused, using the same idioms for this purpose that I heard at the officer messes. Their complaints were generally criticisms of administrative acts that directly concerned them; they seldom showed any interest in war causes and results, and very little interest in the progress of the peace-treaty; Editor Bottomly's anecdotal in-

terpretation of current events satisfied them. Now and again one would hear a soldier remark succinctly and conclusively that when Russia paid over her debt to Great Britain, then they would be jolly well glad to leave that damned country. Stories of Bolshevik atrocities were readily credited. That Pandora tale of the nationalization of women, which was going the rounds of America and Europe, was doing duty up there also, being printed and distributed among all the soldiers. Other propaganda stuff was put before them. In among magazines sent out to the troops just about election time were hundreds of leaflets of The National Democratic Labor Party, lauding the government. One heard little of any cry "On to Petrograd!" there was no genuine desire to fight the Bolsheviks. The remark was current that it would be a shame to lose one's life fighting the miserable Bolsheviks, after getting out of the Great War safely.

## WHAT THE ALLIES ACCOMPLISHED IN NORTH RUSSIA

It was a blind alley the expedition to North Russia led into! The soldiers felt that they had been shoved off civilization upon this cold and dark end of the universe and forgotten. And some of the officers felt that all their efforts were certain to be frustrated. We in the Y. M. C. A. were busy disseminating good cheer at canteen counters and on entertainment stages, but in the course of it all there was for us as detached and somewhat independent persons, perhaps an exceptional opportunity of talking straight and honestly with different ranks, with representatives of the different Allied corps, and — for those of us who spoke mutilated Russian — with the military and civilian Russians.

It was natural for members of the expedition to wonder about the reasons of the Supreme Council of Ten in keeping them in Russia after the armistice. Some thought they were there to ensure payment of Russia's debts to England and France. Others, especially officers, frankly concluded that it was to restore "order" to "distracted" Russia.

The Allies landed at Murmansk on the invitation of the local Soviet. This silly Soviet was forthwith excommunicated by the Moscow All-Russian Soviet, and, shortly after, was shown the door by its

whilom guests. At Archangel, according to the testimony of Mr. Young, formerly British Consul there, the invitation to land was obtained after the Allies had taken the place and nominated a provisional government that should invite them. Then this complaisant body also quickly learned its standing by being kidnapped by some Russian militia and taken to an island in the White Sea, with the connivance, it was rumored, of certain elements of the Allied High Command. The American Ambassador forced the return of this government, but the workmen of Archangel went on a strike as a protest against the abduction. American soldiers helped to put down this strike, and all subsequent strikes, of which there were many.

The Americans at Archangel had to do many things which they considered absolutely antithetical to the spirit in which they were supposed to have come into Russia. Frazer Hunt, who visited this front as correspondent of *The Chicago Tribune*, wrote that this was because the Americans were under British command. Even the Bolsheviks knew that the Americans had a different attitude toward the Russians from the British. A dough-boy who had spent the winter at Archangel told me that the Bolsheviks would often refrain from attacking the Yanks, for some such reason. Once, he related, when the English relieved Americans from a post held by the latter for several weeks, during which the Bolsheviks had not fired a shot, the Reds made a strong attack that very night.

At first there was considerable friction in the Murmansk district between the British command and the Y. M. C. A., which was then directed by Americans. The American workers were accused of spreading American propaganda. The object of our relief and educational work for the Russian population was misconstrued. One British officer losing his temper exclaimed to one of the Y. M. C. A. officials: "Well, perhaps consciously you are not doing any propaganda work, but just the same your government is using you as its agents." This incident is one illustration of the sensitiveness of the "army mind" to propaganda. Several such incidents impressed it upon me that the British army man in this war recognized the power and value of *ideas* and motives. The friction between the Italian and English officers was marked also; their mutual distrust and dislike was general. These international jealousies were silly, and sound doubly so in print several thousand miles away, months later, but they, nevertheless, were undeniably a vital factor in the lives of the troops and in the effectiveness of the expedition.

The Bolshevik Finns who had escaped out of Finland with the German White Guard at their heels and had taken refuge with the Allied troops in the Murmansk district, presented a dilemma. They were promised when they came that the Allies would help them drive the Germans out of Finland. But when after the armistice the Allies supported the same White Finns that had called in German aid to put down the Finnish working people, explanation

to our Finnish Legion was awkward. The Finns went on a strike in March, intending to go back to Finland. General Maynard informed them that in order to avoid bloodshed he would not oppose their departure, but that any individuals found returning would be treated as deserters. After this the matter was patched up for the time.

But the friction that counted most was the growing hostility of the Russian soldiers and the Russian people to the expedition. The out-and-out Bolsheviks were put under arrest at once. I came to know the officer given charge of them. He explained that they were maintained as a gang of workmen-prisoners to do the hardest labor on the Murmansk quay. If they failed to carry out any orders, they were lashed. An Allied soldier went beside each prisoner and saw to it that he "worked." Learning all this I ventured a suggestion to the officer. "Such a waste of time for the guards; why couldn't the soldiers work with the prisoners?" He promptly returned: "Gad, the Tommy wouldn't do that heavy work; they come out here as soldiers, not as a labor-battalion."

Russians who were objectionable to the military were likely to be dubbed Bolshevik. A British officer described how two Russians at K—— suffered from this practice and his story was later corroborated by our Y. M. C. A. representative at K——. The army owed both these Russians large sums on lumber contracts and apparently for no other reason they found themselves accused of being Bolsheviks. It

## 130 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

was made so hot for one of them that he had to leave town without collecting his debt.

General Maynard hated the sight of a "damned Russian" and would not have one in his office if he could help it. This was the attitude of some of the best officers. Generally the natives were treated by the British officers as inferiors, although in some quarters there were attempts made to please the populace. Many of those who disliked the Russian were happy enough to dance with his daughters; moreover, they were quite put out if the Russian notabilities declined to come to the officer soirees, as was sometimes the case. I heard often an observation, common under such circumstances, that "the Russian women are so much finer than the Russian men, you know!" In one village it was definitely one of the duties of the interpreter, an English sergeant, to call upon the families in a cheerful, friendly way; at headquarters' mess they used to joke about this diplomatic offensive, but I doubt if many Russians were taken in by it. The Italians and the French mixed more readily with the population than the English, and picked up quite a smattering of the language.

Once there in the country that great illusion regarding Russia that the people were waiting to be delivered and would flock by the thousands to our standard, was quickly dissipated. The officers and N. C. O.'s who were sent out purposely to train Russian recruits had to be assigned to other tasks: the local population in no sense ever rallied to us.

When this fact was realized, it was decided to mobilize the Russian men of the district. Of the conscripts I knew, some Bolsheviks and some non-Bolsheviks intended to walk over to the enemy whenever the chance offered. Accordingly, the revolt of Russians at Onega the following summer was not a surprise to me. Americans who were at Archangel till mid-summer declared a majority of the Russian troops had gone over to the Red Army.

Over at Murmansk I heard often of the Bolshevik atrocities at Archangel, but the men from there I asked about atrocities were pretty unanimous in denying that they existed. A prosperous merchant at Kola with whom I dined occasionally averred that the only way to settle Russia was to kill every Bolshevik. "Every Bolshevik?" I expostulated. "Every Bolshevik!" was his firm answer. There was atrocity in this man's *mind*, but I don't believe he would actually commit one.

A few people like this merchant, who were prospering during the foreign occupation, feared what might happen to them and their property if the foreign armies were withdrawn, but many Russian moderates were by degrees losing confidence in the Allies there as they saw them taking counsel chiefly with the reactionary elements of the population. One prominent citizen at Murmansk who had been delighted to see the Allies land confided to a friend of mine that since he had seen how the Allies treated the Russians, he doubted if there was much to choose between them and the Bolsheviks. And yet this fellow, belonging

## 132 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

to another Russian party, hated the Bolsheviks cordially.

As for the Bolsheviks themselves, they kept quiet. And for some reason I could not get bourgeois Russians to tell me who the Bolsheviks of the village were. Ultimately, however, two good acquaintances who held positions of trust in the village, acknowledged themselves to me bona fide Bolsheviks.

## HONEY LOU

### AN IMAGINARY ADVENTURE AMONG THE LAPPS

“Through the wilds of Lapland in a snow-dipping caryosa,” is the way Major M——, Evangelist, began his story of a drive to a Lapp village. The country had no striking effect of wilderness upon me and I didn’t ride in a caryosa; I was driven in a roughly but strongly constructed sled already loaded with a month’s rations for the driver. My driver apologized for his team of four reindeer even before I saw it: they were too old. He had thirty reindeer, all but these four too young to carry a sled: he was a poor Lapp. There are Lapps with several thousand reindeer; these fellows are not only rich Lapps, they are rich men; a reindeer this winter (1918-19) is worth 90 dollars. My young driver had just returned from fighting in Roumania a year before and he proceeded to tell me a little about it as we slipped on through the falling snow (I cannot say “dashed, raced or hurtled through the earth’s new white blanket” as would the Major; for it was hard going: a warm day, new snow and wet snow). We had to jump off and walk at each incline and we made several stops to let the reindeer breathe and the driver smoke.

## 134 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

Our journey was across a wide plateau between two river-valleys, from the Russian town of Kola to the Lapp village of Kildensky Pagost. The driver prodded his deer constantly with a fifteen-foot pole and sometimes ran up behind and shouted at them. That kept them moving. We went down all hills at top speed, skirting rocks and bushes; I kept myself on the sled only by being braced; at such times the driver sang out something like

“Mookie bearlie, sarkar, chai,  
Mookie bearlie, sarkar, chai,  
Mookie bearlie——”

a soldiers' song, he said. Finally we had the second valley in view across a lake. “How do you get around this lake in summer?” I asked. “We don't live here in summer,” he replied. “We fish on the inlet near Murmansk in summer. I don't, myself; I tend reindeer on the tundras twenty versts to the east of here, where they feed.”

Upon our arrival at the village, all the shaggy wolf-dogs came out and yelped ill-manneredly at me as the driver took me to the higgledy-piggledy house where I was to stay for the night. In the corner of the first room was an open fireplace where metre-sticks of wood standing on end, blazed cheerily. Through the window I could see similar blazes in neighboring huts or houses; I could see also brawny women chopping wood out-of-doors at the wood-pile. Except for this open fire everything in the place was

dingy and uninviting; not nearly so homelike as the interior of Russian cottages. In this first room lived a consumptive Lapp and his wife. The second room, reached only through the first, was fully occupied by two and a half families. A large oven stood in one corner; in two corners were wide curtain beds. I put down my bag and bed-roll in the remaining corner, where there was a wooden wall-seat and the dining-table. The evening meal followed immediately. The Lapps had their songa (fish), plenty of bread, and tea made with boiling water from an unburnished samovar (you do not find unpolished samovars in well-regulated Russian households!). My host and hostess accepted without a murmur of my jam and biscuits, and, although it was the first week of the long fast before Easter, the host made good inroads into my bully-beef; scarcely any of my offerings were passed on by man and wife to the subordinate members of the household.

The subordinate members of the household were, as I learned by asking, a small adopted daughter, the sister-in-law and her husband of two weeks, and another sister-in-law. This unmarried sister-in-law, Anna, spoke Russian excellently and had that native refinement which always accompanies generous high spirits. I say she had high spirits. She did not display them particularly as I saw her, but nevertheless I know she had them, although at the time she seemed not to enjoy her good health, was very pale. I felt her looking sharply at me at times, as if the way I acted and talked struck a deep chord in

her. She said little during tea. The young husband talked most. He wanted to tell me he had been in the big cities of Russia, in Moscow and Petrograd — had stopped over three days in Moscow when returning from his service in the army: it was a beautiful city, the women there were attractive; his wife did not relish this last remark. "And there is no such frost and winter there!" I said. "Shouldn't you rather spend the winter in Moscow than here?" There was no hesitation in his reply, no weighing of pros and cons: "I should enjoy winter here, most. I am used to this winter; I like it." "Better than summer, here?" I asked again. "Yes, I like our winter better than our summer!"

After tea the hozian (master of the house) departed to spend the night several miles off where his reindeer were herded. The three sisters began at once to sew skins industriously. Out of small pieces of fur they were making the handsome high boots that sold in Murmansk for 40 dollars a pair. The fur was matched very carefully and cut clean for the seam; they used strong thread, drawn off from one of four large skeins hanging on a rod over the oven. The young husband sat very close to his wife, and now and again they whispered to each other in the Lapp language. Anna observed them each time they whispered out of the corner of her eye, just as I was doing.

As I had come into the village I was wishing I had brought with me a gramophone the better to entertain both the Lapps and myself during the evening.

Imagine my surprise and delight to notice, on reaching to the floor to pick up a scrap of skin that had dropped from Anna's lap, a gramophone and some records resting on a small shelf built between the legs of the table.

"Ah, you have a gramophone," I exclaimed to Anna. "The very thing! Let us play it!"

"No," she said, simply, "no!"

"But, Anna," her older sister remonstrated, "you know you do play it every evening!"

Anna resented her sister's interruption. "Well, never mind, I don't want to play it to-night!"

Not only my particular curiosity as to her reasons for not allowing us to have the gramophone music then, but also my general curiosity about this girl, were now thoroughly aroused. I could not press the point further then, but I resolved to find out something about this mysterious, sad girl, who, with her native refinement, seemed rather out of place there in that rough Lapp village.

I was restless; I am accustomed after dinner to expect something especially diverting; I wanted something to happen so that my evening in a Lapp village might be the more memorable. Accordingly, I got up and went out into the other room of the house, where I found the consumptive man and his wife, a strongly-built termagant. He, like hen-pecked men generally, was most genial, and what with the conversation and the warmth and the cheeriness of the fire, I felt better. Some villagers had meantime passed through into the big room, giving me my

opportunity for the sort of entertainment I was after, and I hopefully went back to the inner room, undid my bed-roll, and took out candy, soap, cigarettes, and sugar. I gave away some biscuits and candy, and sold more. I gave each child who came in a bright, red English primer, full of little colored pictures.

The whole village was soon dribbling into the room; the men were smoking my cigarettes and spitting noisily and incessantly on the floor. Then I brought out from my rucksack pocketbooks, gloves, flannel shirts, chains, and buttons, an odd assortment which I had carried in my travels far enough. For two and three roubles each my little objects quickly disappeared and so did the money of the Lapps. Anna purchased one of several English coins I was selling as souvenirs. Then I announced clearly that it was skins, skins! that I wished to trade for. There was that most excellent flannel shirt from New York, and in addition twenty-five packets of cigarettes to be had for a pair of good reindeer-skin gloves. A pair of good reindeer-skin gloves appeared, and successively three reindeer skins as well as several pairs of slippers, plain, with colored-thread markings, and one pair of baby slippers; for all of which I paid with sugar and cigarettes. But no fur hat had been produced. I saw one I coveted on the head of the boy who had sold me a pair of slippers for 40 packets of cigarettes.

His mother had brought back the cigarettes in a cloth and thrown them in a heap on the floor with

dark mutterings; I did not understand what she said; notwithstanding, I had felt myself unqualifiedly the unscrupulous trader who had taken advantage of a boy's vicious craving for cigarettes, especially in the eyes of Anna, who continued to sew skins: so I had presented to the mother the slippers with a careless shrug of my shoulders. In twenty minutes the boy was back with a skin for which I again had paid the heap of cigarettes lying on the floor, and which I discovered afterward was almost worthless. Another boy sold me a fish which my cook would serve only to the cat. Wicked, avaricious people, the Lapps!

My great desire now was to get a hat somehow! I gave one good look at my signet ring and one long thought to the dear aunt who gave it to me for a graduation present, and then told the boy to take the ring home to his mother and see if she would give his hat for it. He came back with the ring on his finger; the hat was soon on my head; the regular 300-rouble sort of brown, soft young reindeer-skin hat with long fur strings at the sides, tipped with white fur; it was mine! I bought another fur hat, not so handsome but more *à la mode*, for the two blankets that I had brought in my sleeping-roll, delivery the following morning. I promised the coat on my back to my hostess for her husband, in the face of a competition of flattering offers. And finally the limit to my salable commodities being practically reached, I sat back among my cleverly-purchased furs to enjoy their luxuriousness. How

could I have spent a more exciting evening in Kildensky Pagost!

During all the time of my trading, however, I had felt the quiet presence of Anna: to her, undoubtedly, I appeared the guilty speculator I was; certainly she took me for a despicable merchant; that I hadn't traded with rum was only because I was unable to get it, she probably thought. After the trading, Anna left the house in the company of a girl of her own age, and so gave me the opportunity to learn her history in the village; in fact, opportunity was already knocking on the door in the person of a lady of fifty who was seated at the table near me, fingering an unsold pair of gloves of mine (how could any Lapp have respect for my glossy factory gloves when the Lapp gloves were so much warmer and prettier?). This lady wore the old Russian, brightly-colored hat, covered in front with a beaded pattern; from her belt hung her keys, her scissors, her thimble, and short strings of beads. Of course, she was only too glad to be my informant.

During the winter and till two weeks before, there had been stationed at Kildensky Pagost a British officer, Captain S—. I was already acquainted with this fact; I had been told at Kola headquarters how this officer had been detailed to this village with orders to keep the Lapps in the neighborhood friendly to the Allies, and, in case of need, to use Lapp scouts for getting quick intelligence of any advance of the enemy. I had been told also what fine things Captain S— had done for the Lapps,

and how, as a consequence, he ruled over them like a king: he had kept his Lapps well-supplied with food; he had broken up an epidemic that once threatened the village, giving what medical attention to its victims he could, himself; he had learned a lot of both the Lapp and the Russian languages, and had taught the children English. Anna was his active lieutenant in all his work, so it now appeared from my gossip's story—and probably his inspiration, as well! Indeed the captain spent most of his evenings in this very room of mine host and beside this very table. Their language studies weren't of a tedious nature evidently. Captain S—— had a Decker gramophone, and for an hour or two every evening it was going steadily. The villagers flocked in, and sometimes the young folks danced there. The captain was as fond of the machine music as the Lapps, and would have played even more than he did, so my discerning gossip assured me, except that he had discovered that the only way he could get time more or less alone with Anna was to stop the gramophone regularly in the middle of the evening; after that he and Anna chatted by themselves in a mixture of Lapp, Russian, and English words.

Well, now Captain S—— was gone. I happened to know how reluctant headquarters were to have him leave Kildensky, even then when there was no danger of military action in that quarter; the sort of thing he did there was a rare piece of good work; having created in a widening circle among all the Lapps of the peninsula an amicable understanding

with the Allied forces. But Captain S—— said he was sick and must go to England, and the doctor said that the captain was much sicker than he admitted and that the proper treatment for his illness could only be given in England. After his departure from the village, Anna was not the same girl; my informant whispered that she thought the girl was sick; from the moment I had set eyes upon her, Anna had impressed me as being a sick woman.

The newly-weds began to retire within their curtained bed and the last lingering guests departed. The hozeaka went to bed and pulled her curtains. I made a soft bed for myself on the floor on top of my skins, and got inside my bed-roll. But I could not go to sleep. The strong tea I had drunk in large quantities, or the excitement of the bartering, or vivid patches of the gossip's story, something it was that kept me staring awake! I watched the moonlight play over the unfamiliar objects of the room. About twelve o'clock Anna returned and made up her bed of skins on the floor, as far as possible from mine, but still so near I could hear her breathing. The consumptive in the outer room began coughing and coughed all night. Before I fell asleep — I think that it was about three o'clock — I had determined upon one additional piece of bargaining in the Lapp village. Immediately after morning tea I proceeded to complete this transaction.

"Anna," I said, pointing to the instrument, "I should like to purchase this gramophone. They tell me it is yours."

“Yes, it is mine, but I do not want to sell it.”

“But I wish a Decker gramophone like yours very much; there isn’t one on the market in all North Russia. I am willing to pay you a good price.”

“There is no price you could name that would induce me to sell.”

“You have in mind the prices I was offering last night for furs! When I really want something I am not stopped by a price; I am an American!”

“You look like an Englishman!”

“Anna, I will give a thousand roubles!”

“A thousand roubles isn’t much this year.”

“Two thousand roubles, then! Twenty-five hundred roubles! You can go a long way on that!”

“You are joking. You are throwing away your money!”

“I’m not joking. I want that gramophone more than a little!”

“Why this one?” Anna was watching me closely.

I did not wince under her examination. “Because I want it. You know what caprice is!”

“Yes, I know what caprice is. You will really pay twenty-five hundred roubles?” Anna was calculating something more than roubles in her small head, I thought.

“Yes,” I said, “I will pay you the money this morning.”

“You may have the gramophone for twenty-five hundred roubles!”

“And how much may I have the records for?

You aren't letting them go with the machine, even for so handsome a price, are you?"

"I never thought about the records. You will not want them! They will be of no use to you. They are badly scratched. You can get new records at Murmansk."

"That's where you are entirely mistaken: it is almost impossible to get records here in North Russia now."

"I will not sell the records!"

"Yes you will — for a thousand roubles?"

"You are a queer man. I noticed that last night when you were buying the skins. You became very much excited about it, didn't you? Are all Americans like you? I never saw one before!"

"Well! which question shall I answer?"

"Why were you so much excited last evening? Your eyes were on everybody and everything!"

"Oh, I don't know!" I wanted to reply — as I always want to reply to such a typical Slav question — "That's wholly my affair!" "May I have the records,— please!"

"Yes, all except one!"

"And may I ask which record is that!"

"Why, I don't see that it should make any difference to you! It's a song called 'Honey Lou'!" This was evidently S——'s favorite record. I knew the music; as music it had no merit; I would wager a good deal that, half-civilized Lapp though she was, Anna's favorite record would have ten times the musical virtue.

"If it is 'Honey Lou'!" I exclaimed with feigned ecstasy, "I will give you two hundred roubles for the record. It is a splendid song, isn't it?"

"I am not used to thinking such music fine, but you English and Americans are, I suppose! It may not be a fine record, but I don't intend to sell it; my caprice, you see! Besides it's the most scratched record of the lot!"

"Don't be sentimental," I said slowly and in a tone different from any I had previously used with Anna; "for that record I will give you 200 roubles, and, in addition, all the skins I purchased last night. I'll have to pay you part with skins because I haven't the whole price in cash left here with me!"

"You are a rash trader! I have seen Russians and Lapps trade in such a spirit, but I do not understand your caprice at all!" She looked me straight in the eyes as if trying hard to understand.

"There you are! All these skins, the profits of my whole expedition!" I picked up my skins one by one and arrayed them on her person and about her chair and the table. I laughed and she smiled: it was a bargain! And the excitement of this single piece of bartering was as much greater than that of all the bartering of the evening before, as was the price greater than all the prices of the evening before.

An hour later I was on my way returning to Kola much more quickly than I had come, in frosty air and over crisp snow. Three days later I was on a boat being carefully piloted out of Murmansk har-

bor. A wicked time I had of it on that cargoless boat! I had come aboard late, after the ship had gone into midstream, to discover that my cabin-berth had been given to another. As a consequence the Captain declared my appearance unofficial, and during the whole voyage I slept in the saloon, I ate in the saloon, I was sick in the saloon, beastly sick and cold! We had among the first-class passengers some English officers, several Italian and American officers, and, at the last table, seven or eight Russian officers; these Russians were my bed-fellows on the benches of the saloon.

The name of Captain S—— I found posted on the life-boat lists that first morning out, and I had him pointed out to me, a tall, fair fellow! He was dressed during the voyage carelessly in soft high boots. He walked the deck, and swung from post to wall inside the boat when she rocked, with an unconscious swank. He was freckled; he did not look sick till you were face to face with him. All the time he was not walking the deck, he sat next the commanding officer at the first table, and played cards with him and his set.

In the middle of one evening, when our unsteady ship sobered down a little, I rose from my recumbent position in the particular corner of the saloon to which I had squatter-claim, with an idea of something to do beyond smoking a cigarette or picking up to read a ship's-library dense novel of Henry James, "The Sacred Fount." I went into the passage-way and took out from my kit-bag near the stairs the

“Decker” I had acquired at Kildensky. I placed it on one of the saloon tables and set it going. The cheer spread about by the clinking notes of the gramophone was only too apparent. It had its effect on the group of officers playing bridge and drinking whiskies, and was, I thought, the indirect cause of bringing their game to an accounting stage. At the moment I saw that Captain S—— was free from his game, I put on my costly record, “Honey Lou.” Instantly Captain S—— came over to my table and sat down beside the machine.

“ Honey Lou, you know how much I love you,  
Love you more and more, each passing day!  
And I’m sure I’m never going to leave you long,  
Or go away, far away.  
Honey Lou-ou-ou-ou-ou!”

At this part of the song the needle had stuck in a cavity in the record. I had known that it would when I put the record on, but I did not show myself ready to shift the needle along. In a minute Captain S—— had reached over and done so. I was surprised by all this rapidity of the steps in the working out of my idea, and so was caught almost unprepared by the Captain’s sudden question, “Have you had your ‘Decker’ long?”

“ Why, no! only a few days.”

“ You bought it in Russia then — second-hand, I suppose.”

“ Yes, and I paid a good, stiff price for it!”

“ Of course you did; scarcity value!”

## 148 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

“The price was robbery, about four thousand roubles.”

“Some one was out to make a fortune out of you. There are officers there in Russia who are making fortunes, they say, ‘skolkoing,’ selling rum and jam to the natives!”

“My vendor was no officer; she is a native, herself!”

“She, she! Oh, I see! In what part of the district were you, Mr. Caldwell?”

“I was at Kola mostly!”

“It was a Kola native you showered with your roubles then!”

“No, I didn’t purchase it at Kola; not many miles away, though.”

“At Kildensky Pagost?”

“That’s it! at Kildensky Pagost. She did not want at all to sell me the machine, Captain S——.”

“You think she consented to sell because you offered so much money. With the money——!”

“The money in this case might do more for her sentiments than the gramophone.”

“You think she intends to follow me. I see you know our story!”

“Yes, I think I understand it, Captain S——.”

“And how was the girl when you saw her?”

“Not in good health, I should say, Captain.”

“Will you have a whisky?” he interposed.

“No, thanks,” I replied, “but I would have a glass of port!” The waiter brought two ports. Meantime I wound the machine up and “Honey

"Lou" came out again for us, and again Captain S—— lifted the needle out of the dent in the record. I was thinking how different he had probably looked when he used to lift the needle out of the dent at Kildensky. I could well imagine what the man was when he was gay. Now the music had given him a touch of melancholy; he felt my unspoken sympathy and he opened a little of his heart to me, saying, "I did think I never could leave the witch,— but I did; I must return to England to save my life, the doctor said!"

"And isn't it the only way to save hers! Shouldn't she come away to England for the best medical care and treatment, too?"

"I suppose so. We civilized brutes leave behind us immoral diseases with these backward peoples, but are too moral to leave behind the cures for them."

"And if she does follow you and find you, you will not allow her to regret yielding this inestimable object for a price?"

"Don't judge me too harshly, Caldwell. I did my best to persuade her to come with me or follow me on close after. But she wouldn't listen to anything I said. The more I urged her, the more I wanted her to come, at the same time the more stubborn she became: all my words only made it clear to her, she said, that for us to be together at all in England would be bad for me! she could not go into my society there with me. Silly child! she thought I might come back to Russia; there it would hurt nobody for us to be together. I had to leave

## 150 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

her talking that way. I gave her directions for following me to England, and I gave her two letters that will let her past the officials at Murmansk, I think. Do you know what made her change her mind?"

"I don't know," I replied sincerely, "I can only guess. Perhaps it is that her will is weaker now, or rather the glamour of the high principle for which she was acting, has gone, and she only feels intense suffering; perhaps she doubts the principle. At any rate she is quite right in getting out of Kildensky; she has seen too much of the world outside her native village; she has seen her one man of the whole world, outside."

"She is capable of coming to find me, do you think?"

"Certainly she is! Those Lapp women are capable of doing everything for their men; they do most of the work; what little I was among the Lapps, I noticed this."

"If you had been there a longer time, as I was, for example, you would have no doubt on that point. The Lapp women do do everything for their men."

"And Anna, when you were there — ?"

"Did everything for me, yes!"

"And you can do everything for her — in England."

"It will be hard. My people — of course — but hang them; for their sakes I doubt if I should be able to pull myself out of this disease!"

"But, for her!"

“ For Anna — well, I shall leave no stone unturned to get better! ”

“ And she, for her part? ”

“ Mind, she has no weak will when there’s anything to be done for me.”

“ And you want her cured for yourself? ”

“ Yes, if it must be put so crudely, I do want her cured for myself.”

“ Another question, S——! don’t answer if I am too inquisitive: you love her just as much as if she hadn’t,— as if she weren’t — sick? ”

“ More, more! It is strange, isn’t it? I would never have believed it possible eight months ago.”

“ More! even though it was she did you the injury? ” I was frightened at the boldness of my question.

“ It was not she who did me the injury. I will confess it was I did her the injury — though I didn’t know it at the time. But if our both being sick — if she were responsible for that; well, I should still love her, and love her no less, I believe! Strange, isn’t it? ”

## RUSSIAN NEW-MINDEDNESS

On account of our present-day means of receiving news by headlines and more headlines, we are gaining wrong ideas about the Russians; for these headlines bear a message, politically-selected, perhaps, as it drifts to us through Europe, which distorts the character of that people. The Russians are not cruel and bloodthirsty; they are not all Cossacks that ride wild horses and love only to fight and plunder. Executions, indeed, there have been, now by the Reds, and now by the Whites. Some one has said that the difference between these two kinds of political slaughter is that the killing by the Reds is the hot vengeance of youth and the killing by the Whites is the cold vengeance of the old. Personally I learned of little violence while I was in Soviet Russia, though I have no doubt the Bullitt figures of five thousand executions in all Soviet Russia may be true enough.

At a political meeting I saw the head of the Kazan counter-revolutionary tribunal that had condemned to death two young officers. I knew that these officers had been plotting the overthrow of the Bolshevik power. The President of this bloody arm of the Soviet power in Kazan sat several rows ahead of me, the only man in the hall with a hat on, the only man

smoking (a fat cigar, difficult to be found in the city at any price!). I thought to myself at the time: "What a heartless barbarian!" Later, taking a position where I could study the fellow's face, I was surprised to find it, far from being rough, rather the face of a simple-souled idealist; surely he had not the instincts of a murderer! The executions for which he and other somewhat fanatical Russians were in those days responsible were the excrescences of what, looked at sympathetically in respect to motives, however mistaken, might be considered as a holy revolutionary crusade that sought not to abridge life but to provide it more abundantly.

Many observers, especially military people I talked with in North Russia, consider the Russian irretrievably childish by nature, but it seems to me that such observers misread Russian character. What often at first appears childishness and lack of judgment and self-government in the Russian may on deeper analysis be found to be an entire absence of the prejudices, artifices, and prides of western civilization. His thinking, especially at the present moment, is loose and decoded.

Many hilarious stories of Russian childishness and superstition can be enjoyed in recent periodical literature. There is the story of the Russian man and wife traveling from Kofkula to Tula who meet a priest and thereupon retrace their steps to Kofkula in order to begin their journey over again under more auspicious circumstances. There is the story of the confiscation by peasants of a large estate on

which was an artificial pond well-stocked with fish. It was at first proposed to kill the fish for a village feast, but the proposal that carried the day was the one that they should let the fish escape down the brook and be free, even as were the peasants now themselves. Quite typical of this sort of story is the recent yarn about the patients at a hospital in Kief who went on a strike because the doctors refused to treat all of them equally with injections which had been the distinct privilege of the typhoid patients.

Whatever basis for these stories there may be, one draws the conclusion that Russian people, or Russian peasants even, are fools, to one's own folly. Rather than exaggerate the number of soft-headed Russians per capita, it would be better for us to consider abjectly the number of fools to be found at home. We have in America many who live mentally altogether on inherited and current prejudices and shibboleths, and not a few of this number we honor with high office and make our mouthpieces. Moreover, we are a people given as much as any other, perhaps, to popular hysteria and hasty mob-action. To be sure, we are rid of many of the superstitions of the older civilizations. We do not, for instance, change our direction by reason of the chance meeting with a priest. But we stick, all the same, to certain crude national and racial beliefs of our own that are as illogical as corresponding beliefs that persist in Russia or in China. That tale of the nationalization of Russian women, which is still sedulously and

indecently retailed by men with reputation among us, is an example of the barefaced credulity that reflects both on the intelligence and on the moral rectitude of some Americans.

In addition to the Russian's simplicity, by some foreigners termed childishness, are the predominant qualities of eagerness and tolerance, normal to the Russian temperament, and to-day accentuated by a flood of energy emanating from the hope and the enthusiasm released by the revolution. On our ship steaming from Newcastle to Murmansk, were 3000 Russians, wounded at Salonika and in France fighting for the Allies, and they gave us our first taste of the new revolutionary ardor. Always they were singing their revolutionary songs; some one of them was often seen reading a newspaper to a group of his illiterate comrades; at one and the same time, two or three self-appointed leaders would be speaking from rostra in different parts of the boat, or groups would be joining in heated but fistless debate. One Russian in first-class, an ex-cavalry colonel whom I know was an ardent monarchist at heart, went down among the soldiers dressed in rough clothes and was listened to with attention, though I suppose the big majority of the men were convinced republicans. (Speaking of old clothes, all the Americans in our party at first rigidly observed the rule in Russia of appearing only in undignified clothes; this was in accordance with one of our superstitions regarding the Bolsheviks.) Raymond Robins, chief of the American Red Cross in Russia, tells an amazing

## 156 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

story of Russian tolerance. Speaking at Gatchina in a hall crowded with pro-Bolshevik soldiers, he was urging support of Kerensky and the war against Germany. When he had finished and was going to the door, there was a mass-movement of soldiers toward him. He feared for his life, as they took him on their shoulders, shouting. But the shouting, he tells us with the wonder still in his heart, was approval of a man himself, of whose political thesis they could not be persuaded.

My experience as an American traveling a good deal in Russia in the summer of 1918 leads me to confess that the Bolsheviks have on the whole surprisingly good manners. I saw among the Bolshevik commissars, clerks and railroad-men less of that hauteur and crankiness than is usually found in the official mind that one comes to know and dread when traveling abroad. Perhaps these officials will become cantankerous in time as the newness of their task wears off, but my guess is that their fresh minds, often sadly untrained, are not going stale in this generation. The experience of some Y. M. C. A. men I knew illustrates well the freshness of the ways of the Bolshevik officials.

A party of Y. M. C. A. secretaries had been successful in crossing the Czech lines from Samara into Bolshevik Russia by boat along the Volga River, and with them had smuggled through a large quantity of flour, which nearly doubled in value every hundred miles they brought it north and east. At Jaroslav the Americans asked permission from the

authorities to send the flour on to Moscow, stating that it was for use of the American Embassy, the American Consulate at Moscow, and the Y. M. C. A. The Bolshevik commissar of transport for the city replied that if the flour was for the American Embassy and Consulate, it would receive immediate attention, would take preference to other freight, and he, himself, would see that the matter were expedited, but there would be a corresponding charge made; for, he argued, the American Government was a bourgeois government and could afford to pay well for services rendered; on the other hand, if it were purely a service for the Y. M. C. A., it would receive the same immediate and preferential and personal attention — but there would be no charge, as the Y. M. C. A. did much for the Russian people.

Fortunately, almost everybody had a warm spot in his heart for Americans. There was a feeling that Americans loved freedom and would show sympathy to the struggling young republic, even though it were socialist. When we wished to get past a guard to a train or into a building, we shouted "Amerikanski Meese," (American Mission); that failing to work, some one dug out an old certificate signed by a well-known Bolshevik like Sverdloff, President of the All-Russian Congress, or presented a passport, or any other paper in Russian or English with a documentary appearance or a red seal upon it, and the guard being unable to read looked up at us respectfully and allowed us to pass. On the other hand, the people hated the English, but, as

## 158 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

far as I could observe, treated them with consideration. It was generally believed that certain English and French officials were aiding the counter-revolutionists. In the official Soviet newspaper one day, I saw the story of the complicity of French and English in the Czecho-Slovak rebellion in the summer of 1918. In view of such facts, it was surprising to me that foreigners were not treated more roughly than they were.

The non-Bolshevik Russians are not discriminated against so much as one has been led to suppose. The fact is, that the former bourgeoisie are, in these hungry days, the only people well fed, generally speaking; for they may sell an overcoat or a jewel and obtain in return the butter, chicken, and eggs that are sold at prohibitive and speculative prices. Many of the former officials still hold office, especially in the country. Lenin retains the Zemstvo organizations, although they were the typical bourgeois, or middle-class, institution of before-the-war, because he realizes its functional value in the new state. Many of the old Zemstvo officers remain in positions of trust. I read daily proclamations in the newspapers declaring the perverseness and black character of the bourgeoisie, but whenever these proclamations were put into effect, it was generally with a wide latitude, and common sense, and humanity, and allowances shown for the upper classes. In the schools, at least, I believe there exists irrefutable democracy. The children of the upper classes receive exactly the same food, instruction, and indi-

vidual attention as children of the present "ruling class."

It sounds odd to speak of anything to do with Bolshevism as democratic, but we must beware that we do not come to a consideration of Soviet theories prejudiced, prepared to interpret them only in the terms of the static forms of the so-called democratic government of the past, forgetting that time and change of conditions may eventually destroy the democratic value even in such a famous instrument of democracy, as, for example, the constitution of the United States, itself. Lenin has said that Russia has to-day the most democratic government in the world. One reason for this, in his opinion, is that in Russia the people control through the Soviets the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the government, directly. Judges are elected, the local Soviet makes its own laws; it is the executive, itself; its members are commissars of labor, education, streets, police, etc. We, for our part, may prefer as the guiding principle in our government, the separation of the executive, judicial, and legislative powers, but, at the same time, we may be generous enough intellectually to admit that our principle is essentially no more *democratic* than the Soviet principle. It has been thought that it is the unrepresentative character of the present body of electors that makes the Soviet government undemocratic; it has been thought that the present Russian Government is a class-autocracy. The Bolsheviks reply to this that all who do any work with hand or

brain among them are entitled to vote, and that idleness is the only disqualification for voting. The anti-Bolshevik Bessabarian delegate to the Supreme Peace Council at Paris, after traveling through South Russia, declares that he found the city people there want Bolshevik rule and that the peasants are unconvinced that there could be a better rule. Judging from several such pieces of information, it would seem that at the present time the Bolshevik Government is this much democratic: that it is at the least more wanted than any alternative government.

No doubt propaganda has played a large part in increasing support for the Bolsheviks. In Kazan I was always seeing poster-announcements of lectures on socialism and revolution. A well-known professor of history at Moscow gave a course of lectures on the French revolution. I heard the most important woman of the Bolsheviks, Kallantai, their first minister of education, lecture on the subject, "Russian Parties" in the Workingmen's and Peasants' Hall, once the grand concert-hall of the city, but then dismantled; the pictures of royalty had been torn out of their frames, but the frames remained unbroken to tell the story. It was the "new-time" evening of a hot day; the sun shone through the curtainless west windows, and right into the speaker's face; everybody improvised a fan; but no one wearied of the two-and-a-half-hours performance. The artisan family was there in its holiday clothes, comfortable and smiling in spite of the heat; the younger element enjoyed itself in the usual way, during the inter-

mission (there were refreshments in the ante-chamber); there was a sprinkling of former officers and bourgeois women with curling lip. Behind me sat the President of the Kazan Mensheviks (the Socialist party of the extreme right). Kallantai excoriated the Mensheviks for their treachery to the Proletariat, and the Menshevik President, thereupon, left the hall. Our skillful and persuasive orator next vehemently attacked the right Social-Revolutionaries, accusing them of wishing to set up a government like that of America, where, she declared she knew by her own observations, the capitalists controlled votes by manipulation of the press.

The priests are active propagandists, as a rule, against the Bolsheviks. The priests feel keenly their loss of power over the people since the revolution. The church, however, has not in any real sense, been persecuted; all church buildings are intact, and every service of the church calendar is held without change, the priests not recognizing the new calendar adopted by the government, which is our calendar. At the ancient cathedral church in the Moscow Kremlin, I witnessed, with many other Americans, the impressive all-night Easter service, when for the only time in the year, all the church candles are lighted. The Soviet at Moscow did take action to destroy one of the most virulent religious superstitions. The Russian orthodox believing that the bodies of the saints remain in their graves uncorrupted, the Soviet authorities disinterred publicly some of these saints' coffins to prove to the people the emptiness of the

tradition. At the village of K——, I expressed to two Bolshevik school teachers whom I knew to be devout and regular church attendants, my surprise that they were good Bolsheviks and at the same time good churchmen. They replied: "We Bolsheviks are not against the church; we are against the priests who for many years have robbed the people and helped the Government to keep them down."

At Kazan in May I witnessed the ceremonies of Kresne Hod, one of the holiest of the many holy days. Priest and flock of every church in the city marched with its treasured icons to the Kremlin Square before the gates of the fortress, for the annual service held there in the presence of thousands. It was a striking picture — the broad Volga River off several miles below under rounded hills just getting green, the old painted Tartar walls of the Kremlin at the rear; the faithful of each congregation coming from different directions to join the mass, adding banner to banner, and color to color, each band singing, and its own church bells ringing in the distance; women in bright peasant costume in knots here and there; squads of Red Guard soldiers carrying bayonets, constantly passing through the mass of people to the fortress, and, as they did so, baring their heads respectfully, neither annoying nor being annoyed (this was a sample of ordinary Russian tolerance); in the center of the crowd, on a dais, the gorgeously bedecked hierarchy of Kazan Province. From Russia one has to go back to the Middle Ages for such a spectacle. The Bolsheviks have taken

over from the church some of this appeal of the pageant. In the proletarian celebrations is usually a display of revolutionary banners, and there is much revolutionary music, which draws upon the folk and the church melodies.

The new political movement in Russia seems to have borrowed much more than pageantry from the church. It seems to have awakened and concentrated the power of faith in the people. Russians are beginning to believe that a better life is possible for them, and that they have in themselves the means of making this better life. They recognize that these desirable things cannot be had by sheer desire, however, and that as a condition precedent they must improve both their work and their brains. That is why they attach such importance to education, and why there has arisen among them a feverish, and as yet superficial, new culture. Labor magazines, and cheap editions of the classics, and people's universities, and enlightenment societies have appeared all over the country; even in parts which were no longer revolutionary and had come under a counter-revolutionary government, such as North Russia, I observed these phenomena.

But along with the new belief of the Russian is a skepticism on his part of the agencies of government and enlightenment. He doggedly calls in question the church and the old education. Oppressed so long, he fears reenslavement. Confronted with offers of help and encouragement for freedom from outside his country, he is preternaturally suspicious.

## 164 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

He was, I found, suspicious of the good will expressed in the messages of President Wilson to Russia. Coming up the Hudson River on an Atlantic liner after two years abroad, I stood beside a young Russian girl who was seeing New York for the first time. "How wonderful," she gasped, "how like a magic city! See the steam-smoke being puffed slowly from each building!" Then after five minutes of silence, she declared solemnly, "I said a few minutes ago I liked your New York. I do! But, now, I am afraid of it, very much afraid." What this girl felt toward the expression of American genius, many other Russians feel. They admire, but they fear. Do they fear that even in our wonderful civilization, boasting of its freedom, there may not be some doors closed to hospitality, some avenues closed to the mind, some spaces closed to the spirit?

## TAVARISH

Tavarish,  
You crossed the lines too soon!  
You should have waited for the movement of your  
company  
In the general revolt that is coming.  
Poor fellow, you were too impatient!  
Well, never mind! You're here amid your strong  
Red friends,  
If only for an hour.  
Wounded Tavarish, drink this hot tea;  
Drink to the common weal of us common Russians!

Tavarish,  
You were hungry in Archangel — the Allied base;  
And they drafted you to fight your Russian  
tavarishee;  
And so you had to turn a gun against us — poorly  
aimed, very poorly aimed!  
But the English sentry who spied you  
Crossing the lines,  
Creeping in the woods through the crusted snow,  
Aimed well!  
Drink, dying comrade, this new wine of Russian  
treading,

That bleeding feet have pressed;  
Drink to the life of the nascent republic  
With all your yearning flickering desire.

Alas, Tavarish!  
You will not drink  
Even one toast to new Russia.  
The Englishman aimed well —  
Your English brother,  
Toward whom you bore no grudge,  
For whom you gave your life,  
As well as for us —  
Tough Red Guards — freezing, and starving and  
singing in these far northern swamps.

Never mind, Tavarish!  
For you, it is as well.  
The rigors of winter, and the many woes of Russia,  
For you are now done;  
And the Spring of no country and every country  
Already is yours.

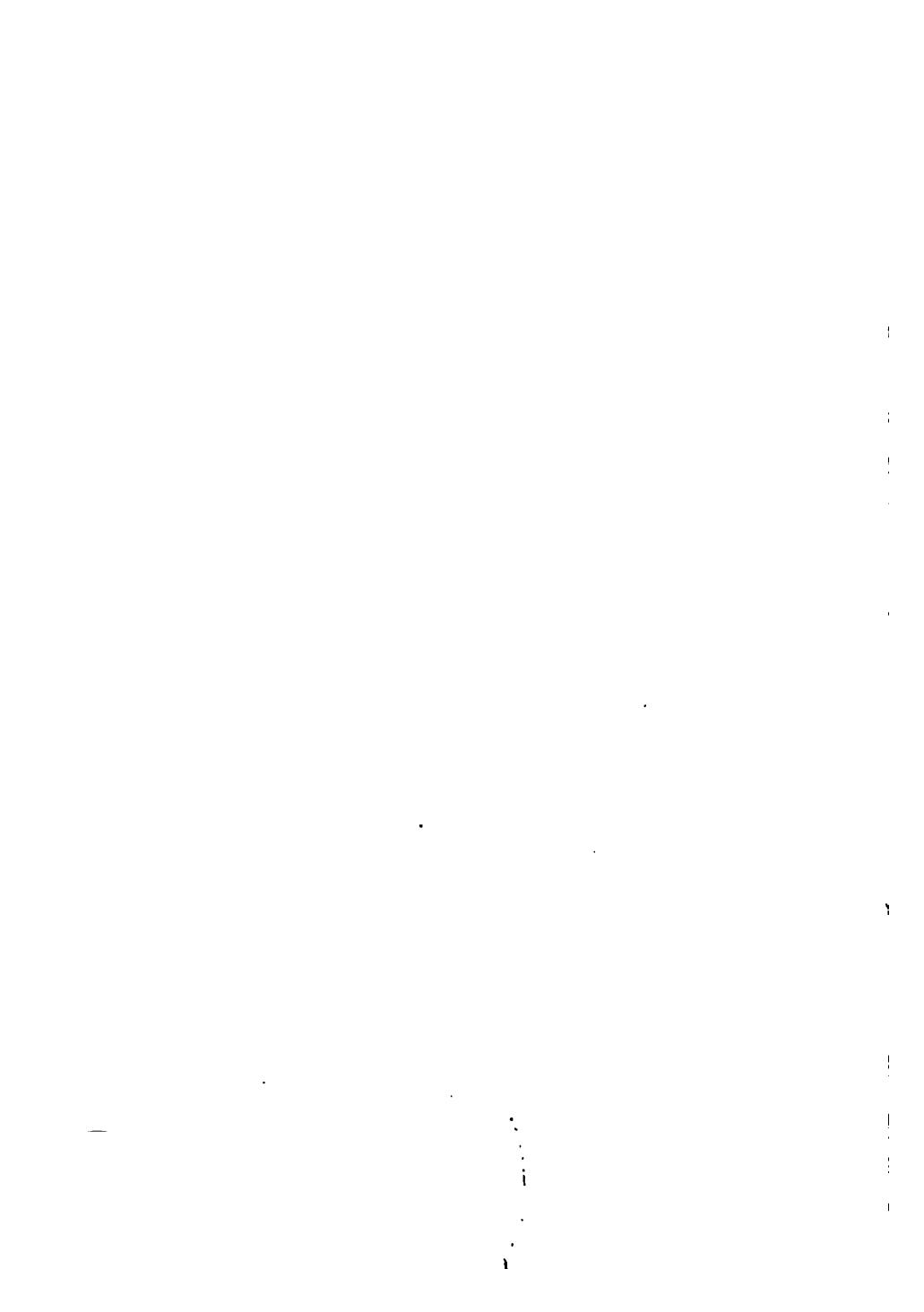
But, Tavarish, young lad,  
One enviable thing you missed —  
Perhaps you don't know —  
The hearty greetings of revolutionary comrades,  
The hail of their swelling songs.  
You don't know how gay we keep  
In our Arctic camp, Tavarish,  
With a hail, and good cheer,  
And a drink around,

**TAVARISH: A POEM TAVARISH 167**

Of the Russian new wine;  
Royally hailing our republic of kings —  
Long live the republic of workmen!



**PART TWO**  
**WHOLE CLOTH**



## WHOLE CLOTH

### A DIALOGUE ON POLITICAL REALISM

### CHARACTERS

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH STEKLOV, *a professor.*

ALEXIS PETROVICH ZOLODEEN, *who has come to manhood during the war.*

PIOTE VASSILIEVITCH SEMYONOV, *a judge.*

FRANK PLAISTEAD, *an American.*

PAVEL ANDREIVITCH ALEXIEFF, *a Russian gentleman; known as "Pasha."*

NICOLAI IVANOVITCH SOLKOV, *an artist; known as "Chastleevy," which, translated, means "happy."*

BURTSEV, *a waiter, also proprietor of the café.*

CARL MARDINBURG, *an Austrian war-prisoner.*

A BEGGAR, *Guests of the Café, Men of the Crowd outside.*

*It is seven o'clock of an August evening in the Zolodeen Park at Nishni Novgorod in 1918. It has been a hot day, but now a breeze plays among the trees. At a table in the corner of the veranda of the Burtsev Café sit six men talking animatedly; smoking continuously, and occasionally drinking beer or*

fruit-water. Their conversation sometimes attracts a group of listeners. From this corner of the café, the veranda being high, one can see boats passing on the river, and, now and then, a large steamer sliding impressively into dock. Past the café, on the path several yards away, the crowd moves in two opposite streams, watching the war-hydroplanes at their evening practice, and talking vivaciously. A barefooted newsboy enters the café with the afternoon telegram sheets. ALEXIS PETROVICH, the youngest man at the table, buys one and reads it eagerly with his friend at his left, MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH STEKLOV. This friend is a striking person, with thick white hair, kindly wrinkles, large head, short neck; his cheeks have good color; he wears a low collar and a dark-red tie that becomes him well. ALEXIS PETROVICH is fresh in face; he has a slight figure, an oval head, abundance of curly hair, and small but perfect features. In fact, his physical charm is such that he is always listened to. His family, the Zolodeens, had for years distinguished themselves in the Czar's army, and young ALEXIS had from the outbreak of war served as an officer of the Guards, till in the second year he was taken to Germany a prisoner. The youth, as a wave of emotion passes over him, looks from the telegrams, cheeks flushed.

#### ALEXIS

It is reported here, they have arrested Prince Kropotkin! Kropotkin, Russia's most illustrious

apostle of freedom! How can you defend this, Teacher?

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

To imprison at all, is to infringe freedom. To restrain any man seems indefensible to him, for I suppose he has his own ideas of what he should do and what he should not do.

**ALEXIS**

I had that impressed upon me this morning when I went out to the Breshky Hills to enjoy the view. I found a fellow lying beside the road in the cool grass and reading the editorials in *The Red Journal*. I sat down beside him and said, "Tavarish, why aren't you at your work during the middle of this fine day?"

**A BYSTANDER**

And why didn't the fellow reply, Alexis Zolodeen, by asking you the same question!

**ALEXIS**

He replied: "I worked all last week and earned one hundred roubles. May I not now enjoy myself in the sun and in the wind! It is right that I should work only when I need. But here in this paper of The Party I read that there should be a new law compelling every man to work during every labor day, in order that the Republic may have commodities." So this fellow in the sun and the wind, Teacher, was thinking only of his own freedom!

## MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Every man makes what fight for his own freedom he can! The rich man, however, has the advantage: his money helps him.

## CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

But it is a cheap freedom that is purchased by money alone! Surely the political and the economic freedoms are not the only ones! It's a wise man who keeps free, free from wife, from friends; free from the mire of books and papers!

## JUDGE SEMYONOV

Free from the very struggle for freedom, free from freedom's catchwords; who, to preserve quiet in his own soul, is willing to accept certain transitional servitudes which self-blindness or the blindness of the times thrust upon him.

## PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

It appears to me that you are all talking of a freedom that few people are interested in. A freedom in essence, philosophical anarchism — and here we are, back to our topic, Prince Kropotkin!

## FRANK PLAISTEAD

(*An American self-made business man, with many wrinkles for so young a man, with a firm mouth and a piercing eye. He lives with the family of JUDGE SEMYONOV; is engaged to the daughter, Sara Petrovna.*) About time we came down to earth! If I am to be up in the air, I should much rather be up

in one of these hydroplanes! How does all this dissertation on Freedom explain why these blood-thirsty Bolsheviks should imprison a man like Kropotkin!

**JUDGE SEMYONOV**

*(A quick nervous man of aristocratic bearing. Possessed of a wealthy wife. Has traveled much, especially in England, from which he has just returned.)* "A man like Kropotkin!" Yet Tuesday night, Frank, I think you were mentioning Kropotkin as "one of those gifted but perverse philosophers of disorder that should be banished from the state!" (All laugh at Plaistead, including several listeners outside the veranda.) Kropotkin and some of us Social-Revolutionaries suffer almost as much persecution to-day as ever. I tell you this scum of the Proletariat, by putting out of action the most trusted leaders of the revolt in Russia, is destroying what opportunity there was to create a brilliant Socialist state. What finer leader of Russia's revolutionary Intelligentsia for three generations than Kropotkin! Did he not spend four years for us in the fortress of Saint Peter and Paul!

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

It seems you expect me to give reasons for Kropotkin's arrest.

**A MAN FROM THE CROWD**

Tell them the reason, Professor! Down with all Princes! Draw the blood of Counter-Revolution!

## 176 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Let us remember, first, that it is only newspaper report that Kropotkin has been arrested. If it is true, I am sorry, I am grieved to hear it. I do consider him a great son of Freedom. He has done valiant service; he is an old warrior whose eye is now dim and whose arm is weak. But, were he young, there need be no apology for holding an opinion different from his at this crisis, and, for acting upon it! The freedom which Bolsheviks fight for —

### JUDGE SEMYONOV

Do tell us, Teacher, what may be the connection between Bolshevism and Freedom!

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

The freedom Bolsheviks seek is a narrow freedom; at the most, but preliminary to the richer freedoms in love and knowledge to which artists and other eager souls devote their energies. This narrow basic freedom is *social equality*.

### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

There never can be equality! Some men can do; others can't. Power goes only to those who are born to exercise it.

### PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

Of course it does, Chastleevy. You believe in force just as I do; it's the only thing that will move Russians. If the Bolsheviks manage to keep the upper hand,— prove to me that they are the strongest, and you may count me with them!

## JUDGE SEMYONOV

Pasha, it is easy to see that you were born with the shrewdness to discover strength and ride behind it.

## CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

You are wrong, Pasha: I do not believe in force. The artist, the man who creates, he possesses the genuine power, but he is not bigger, not louder, not shrewder, than the man who can't do; he just—I might simply say—he just loves to work well!

## MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Good! You and I agree, I think, Chastleevy, only you didn't wait to understand me. Of course men aren't equal in gifts, a fact my "social equality" allows for. Furthermore, I think that by taking power from those who have usurped it by might or chance, my "social equality" would free men to be more the masters of their own talents, however unequal these talents might be. It would strip a man of power gained by appropriation of another's talent; it would appraise at its true value the "shrewdness to discover strength and ride behind it." Isn't it true that this shrewdness which exploits, and other qualities of a second-rate mind,—agility, trickiness, hardness, mere cleverness—are, perhaps as a rule, the factors that determine success in the competitive capitalist order?

## ALEXIS

Does what you have just said, Teacher, mean that you would have your "social equality" replace cap-

180 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

MICHAIL SERGEVITCH

You're not a Bolshevik! You've done some straight thinking during the war, but you won't act upon this as does a Bolshevik.

JUDGE SEMYONOV

Well, I'm a Socialist! I believe in social changes.

MICHAIL SERGEVITCH

It doesn't take courage to believe that much. Social changes are really unavoidable, aren't they?

ALEXIS

I think the Judge is much under English influences. That he has been so long in England counts for something, doesn't it?

MICHAIL SERGEVITCH

Oh, Judge Piotr is carried away by the constitutional bias of the English Laborites.

JUDGE SEMYONOV

I certainly have my predilections. I like English advanced labor thought because it is so sane. It is broadminded, too, much broader than your Gompers unions, Frank. The statesmanlike program of "The English Labor Party" may, by its very moderation, enable England to lead us all in making these stupendous social adjustments that will as surely follow after the war in all countries as day follows night. The "Independent Labor Party," which is a component part of the English Labor Party, is

frankly Socialist, and some of its members are so extreme as to speak kindly of the Russian Bolsheviks.

**CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST**

All these moderate Laborites or Socialists entice some of the upper class to move to the left, and win them as adherents without making too great a strain on their pride. For after all is said and done, it is not a very pleasant thing, suddenly, to work, cheek by jowl, with men in a lower class. It is like breaking caste; your old friends boycott you.

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

There is a measure of truth in your observations, Chastleevy. It is painful at first for a social or intellectual blue-blood to become a Bolshevik. He is self-conscious and uneasy in his heterodoxy, till he comes to recognize his own brethren-in-idea both above and below.

**CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST**

But why should these finest of the upper-class minds cease to officer the state? I want the state in the hands of the best men. I am an aristocrat, you see!

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

And so am I!

**CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST**

I have doubts that these from the upper class who unite with the proletariat in this crisis of the war, or immediately afterward, can continue to work with

## 182 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

the labor people in all their social radicalisms. Moreover, if the educated elements leave their moorings to enter Bolshevism, shouldn't we expect the uneducated elements also to undergo a "change," and meet us half-way!

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Certainly the lower class must forego any prejudices it harbors against members of the old upper-class; more than that, it must work side by side with them, taking their advice. In order to obtain firm organization and control, and to increase productivity, the proletarian state needs the co-operation of the trained members of the bourgeoisie. From them we learn.

### ALEXIS

But I hear it argued by the Left-Communists that if members of the bourgeoisie fill the managerial positions, control will pass from the hands of the proletariat.

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

I'm not afraid of that! We shall not put the cart before the horse: the driving power remains with the workmen.

### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

But these new worker-rulers must work. We will not divide profits with a gang of loafers.

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Certainly, certainly! You tell us your artist is one who loves to work well. Now, if the laboring-

man works well, why isn't he fully the man your so-called artist is? As for the superiority of brain-labor over hand-labor, hasn't a little too much been made of that? The cabinet-maker may use his brain more than the artist.

**CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST**

He may! He does, often! The work of some so-called artists is mostly hand-labor.

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

And there may be more skill enlisted in the running of a motor-boat or the firing of an engine than in the teaching of algebra. Furthermore, the quality of the laborer's thought is the quality of the man; often, original, fearless, and honest; especially must it be recognized that the laborer has been forced to think faster and more independently since the war. In the factory or in the trenches, he has learned something of the truth not found in the modern sociology and economics; he will refuse to be the same pawn he was.

**ALEXIS**

Few share such an opinion, Teacher! It is the common mistake to suppose that the workman does not think. Perhaps he is ignorant; nevertheless, this very ignorance saves him from some of the mal-education of stock-schooling. There you see Smernoff, the boot-mender, passing and talking in a free and easy manner with a soldier tavarish; probably explaining the day's news as it has entered into his mind. Well! I have talked often with Smernoff,

## 184 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

and always with profit: his arguments are unpleasantly blunt at times, but as often as not I have to admit that he is right — at least for him, if you understand me.

### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

Smernoff is a good boot-maker, too! As a rule the best worker is the best citizen. Any Bolshevism I approve, must provide for each citizen some work so hard and difficult as to make him happy. My work occupies me completely; Tolstoy's motion that every artist must raise his own potatoes is not, to my way of thinking, sensible; when I am confronted with a task, I must work at it steadily for days — and for nights; help comes to me off the edge of dreams! If the Bolsheviks show they are, in any such sense, a workers' party, not shirkers: if they respect the happiness derived from work — I wish them success!

### PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

This is one of your serious nights, Chastleevy! I hate to hear your talk of work. It is silly.

### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

When I was young, I thought work silly, too; I was a great seeker after happiness. At first, I took it to be what people said it was. It was to have this or that fine thing, to experience the pleasures of the flesh, to be free — to be as much possible, free to do anything that might come into one's head or one's friend's head, to go and do. And so I went

on many parties and I drank wine freely. I looked with the others on the women that it was thought were beautiful and gay. My father was rich, but that I might be richer, he decided that I must establish myself in business, and I was willing to do that. But all this time I was interested in art. I amused myself at odd times with sketching and I was very fond of visiting the studios of several artists whom I knew. One day I was admiring a new portrait just being finished by Glubovsky, a portrait of his father; the portrait said so much to me of Glubovsky, father and son, and of other individuals, that I found myself saying to my friend, the painter, I do not know why, "I should like to paint a portrait." "Of whom should you like to paint a portrait?" asked he. "Of myself," responded I, feeling as he did that it was a very curious thing I had said. But I painted the portrait of myself. It was very poor. So much pleasure did I find in that labor, however,—pleasure that I had not before known existed in the world, that since that time I have never sought else but to paint; I have never since sought pleasure in parties and in being free. Perhaps you will say I should not call this painting of mine, work, for I take such pleasure in it; but I do call it work: it absorbs me, it tires me tremendously, it is a means of getting the best out of me for society: through it, society spends me and keeps me a contented member.

And I should like to see that every one is also spent and happy through work. That is why I think I

## 186 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

might become a Socialist: in a Socialist State it seems to me that every person would be most free to devote himself to the pursuits of his choice. No boy would fail to be an artist because he is poor. If by "social equality," Teacher, you mean opportunity to every one to spend the riches within him, then indeed I am with you for social equality. It doesn't matter so much to me what you will do with the money and the lands.

### PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

Doesn't matter much, eh! Chastleevy, you're just another damned communist!

### FRANK PLAISTEAD

After taking a turn or two about in Europe, I don't wonder people in these old countries talk as some of you Russians do. We have in America just those opportunities of which you speak, Solkov. And young people have been coming to us from the oppressed countries for a century to find oportunity.

### PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

To find money! Money, I take it, lies in the way at your feet there, to be kicked about!

### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

Yes, I have often wondered, too, if it were not the opportunity to make money that the Americans treasure? Do they really believe that it is by their money they are free?

## FRANK PLAISTEAD

But I tell you — will you listen? — don't insinuate that lie about us that it's all a question of dollars. What's all this rot the Socialist gets off, if it isn't mostly about money! They are the "have-nots." Now I tell you, in America, we want everybody to be a "have"; and we are moving along pretty well that way. Chastleevy, we try to give everybody a good job! Talk with any Americans! You will find we are content with our country. What does the government do to hurt any one of us?

## PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

Hurrah, Plaistead! One fellow who isn't a killjoy!

## FRANK PLAISTEAD

Put it there, old man!

(*Shakes his hand.*)

## ALEXIS

And do you Americans fight to make all of us in Europe content with ourselves as you are? You say you fight to make the world "safe for democracy"; what is this "democracy" you would have safeguarded? One American says it is providing good jobs; another, free schools; still another, assurance to the aristocrats that they may choose rulers that can rule! And so it goes!

## FRANK PLAISTEAD

It's all that! Come and see what our democracy is! We are always glad to demonstrate it. You'll

## 188 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

know then that it's worth extending over the wide world.

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

All this protestation sounds very fine. Only it is so easy. Do you know that our Czars have made us speeches about peoples' rights, and that some of them were sincerely meant, too! And in your freer countries politicians, like evangelists, are very useful to provide the public with appearances. You really can't blame us in old Europe for having our own opinions as to why America went to war. How did we know that it wasn't just because you had written certain notes to Germany and got out of patience with her at last!

### JUDGE SEMYONOV

That is too absurd, Michail Sergeivitch! It was more than that.

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Yes, I suppose so. There must be something more than hot blood back of the war.

### FRANK PLAISTEAD

It's my opinion that bad blood is best let out. What do you think is back of the war, Professor? Hand us the anti-war dope of your non-patriots. You'll recognize its just weight when you see it facing you cold.

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

The cause of the war is not to be found in the

Red, the White, the Green, and the Aquamarine Government Books — that much is certain. These nationalists, each accusing the other, speak out not even an image of the truth! One set of warring powers may have a different system of registering or suppressing the popular will than another, but it was not over this, exactly, we all began fighting each other. The so-called democratic nations with whom Russia was in league certainly did not press it upon us at any rate, that we were fighting for any such purpose. I don't think we can escape it — the war had certain diplomatic origins. Each national group of leaders is struggling to maintain as much power for itself as possible. These leaders, represented by the diplomats, are the money class and a blinded intelligentsia; and as the war has progressed, there has emerged, more and more, class feeling: there has actually been a class-war arising out of the national wars and staring these determined leaders in the face.

FRANK PLAISTEAD

Our leaders are not the money-class!

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Americans do not admit that their money-class has power; it may have less than the money-classes among some of their Allies; the American money-class found it difficult to rally the whole people to the war, especially the people of its Western States — so Alexis learned in Germany. Wilson provided the high ideals sufficient to tease the people into war,

## 190 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

and he was ably seconded by a majority of the Intelligentsia, which jumped to the war madness just as the Intelligentsia of England, Germany, and France had done. According to reports, the war-hatred enjoyed by the American ministers, professors, editors, and politicians was as virulent a specimen of the species as you would find in the older race-proud and race-hating nations of Europe. There were a few voices raised against the un-Americanism of the war, but these were soon hushed by prompt and cruel punishment, social or really penal.

FRANK PLAISTEAD

Professor, how do you know of conditions in America? Surely you don't trust information Alexis picked up in Germany!

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

No, I don't. Any more than I should trust American information about the Germans in war time. The information I rely upon about America comes from talks with various Americans. To be sure, one was an I. W. W. and two were Socialists, but the others had all the marks of American aristocracy. One, indeed, supports the war on the narrow ground that after all the world was in for a cleansing by war, and America, being in it now, will be a weight toward the right solution it brings, which all radicals are going to welcome.

JUDGE SEMYONOV

That American's is my own feeling as to America's

object. She will exert the right influence; through Mr. Wilson's fourteen points, for example. Certainly we Russians will find America our best friend at the peace conference; we should be glad she is in the war.

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

Her aims do go a certain distance.

**JUDGE SEMYONOV**

Why not take America's aims as the best, and cease cavil!

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

Perhaps they are the best Democracy can offer. We welcome them for what they are.

**ALEXIS**

And Wilsonian "Victory!"

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

I confess I don't see the value of long words and philosophy when a nation fights for its honor. We fight because we had to. If when you are returning home to-night, a man accosts you with a raised fist, you will not stop to inquire whether he is intoxicated or in need of bread; you will strike first and strike hard. Plain, isn't it! So why all this chatter about the money-class in America. We haven't any money-class; that is, I mean to say, our money-class has no political power; in fact, it is so powerless, that when it becomes known that the rich men want anything done, the people get on their uppers and vote

the thing down, no matter what the merits. Look at the great hold Bryan has had upon the common people for years, simply because he posed as a people's leader. And as for an intelligentsia, Americans would laugh at you to hear mention of such a thing. I have heard you, Professor, carry on what a mess of things your Russian intelligentsia has made by dabbling in politics; you say they have failed utterly to understand the masses.

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Utterly! They are like an insoluble chemical floating on top of a liquid. The two bodies have different properties!

FRANK PLAISTEAD

Well, you can believe me, we in the good old U. S. don't intrust our important business to intellectuals. The men who are running the war for us in committees down in Washington are not intellectuals. Our Government is run on business principles. Our people prefer a good sewer-system to an oratorical contest. You Russians stand at the street-corners and harangue for hours; we elect representatives to do our talking for us.

JUDGE SEMYONOV

Yes, the representatives do the talking and the political bosses build the sewers, receiving commissions from the contractors, their personal acquaintances.

*(All laugh; even PLAISTEAD himself. He*

*has BURTSEV, the waiter, bring cigars which he offers around the table. Each man accepts one except ALEXIS PETROVICH. The lad is immersed in his own thought, his chin resting on one hand, the other hand now and then getting into his hair and rumpling it.)*

**JUDGE SEMYONOV**

I don't see why you need to despise your American intellectuals, Frank. The English do better by their men of thought. It is said that the men of Oxford and Cambridge rule Britannia; that the Oxford Union trains for Parliament. But with you Americans, I believe there is no great appreciation for the man of cultivated thinking and sentiment. I hesitate to hold your educational system accountable for the banality and bombast of your state and congressional representatives. You boast of your free schools, but I have yet to learn that they turn out men of free thought!

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

Well, I don't think we should care for your Russian specimens of free-thought: loose nuts wrenching themselves loose from their place, and clogging the machinery! The educational system of a Democracy should turn out men with common warm social feelings, men united in heart and mind for the rational progress of the public.

**ALEXIS**

A machine that turns out one hundred million

## 194 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

copies of one pattern, all thrilling with a sense of duty to the rational progress of the public! It is your university man, I understand, Mr. America, that is often most banal of all. His school loyalties are ubiquitous and childish; they consist of the fond memories of his club and his football teams; his particular college is for definite reasons superior to all others. The classmate who is not interested in all this boyish controversy and self-congratulation is looked upon with suspicion. Even at the best schools, the man of cultivated thinking and sentiment is appreciated much as is the man who makes the prayer at a dedicatory service; he is occasional, there is found a use for him only rarely.

Taking it as a whole, our modern school system everywhere reflects pretty well our economic system. With the hardness and immorality of business go the hypocrisy and shallowness of school; both love rule and precedent; business has its own reasons for being conservative, and school has its own reasons for respecting the dictates of business. At school one learns a thousand proprieties and exactitudes to observe; the excellence of the national régimes past, present and future; the divine right of the wealthy to own! Once this scale of values is committed to heart the graduate is generous in giving advice to the unlearned: he knows just what to think and to do, because it all happened so once before.

Worst of all is the pride bred at school: the belief that all this foolish teaching is the sum of all that one can know, and that if one does not persevere and

receive a diploma, he will never be an associate of those holding superior rank. Such pride is a mockery of the humility of the truly intelligent man, who holds no one in disesteem for ignorance, alone — ignorance which is accidental! Indeed, the ignorance of the street and of the work-bench has certain biologic-political value. Certainly I regret any over-individualism in my own education which would prevent my making quick contacts with those not trained my way.

#### PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

Don't worry about your education, Alexis. You're a boy yet. One can see you have had no experience with the world. It's time now for you to break from the leading strings of Michail Sergeivitch. From him you have learned the Greek, and doubtless well. From him, you have taken these theories you have just expressed about schools — and many other theories. But now you must know the world. Have some fun, the fun of doing things! You will learn the real secrets of living, so. *Veritas in vino!* Books and schoolmasters — with all apologies (*bowing to the Professor*) — are a weariness to the flesh.

#### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

*Veritas in vino!* Pasha, I acknowledge for Alexis and myself the jibe you toss at us. True! education over wine-cups is not the worst; especially if that means the intellectual advantages of sympos-

## 196 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

ium; the digestion of the criticism of outspoken comrades.

### JUDGE SEMYONOV

We want nothing short of the best education, Teacher. And do you not agree that if we provide this, the good state will come in its own good time?

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

I do not agree! Rather, I say the new education can come only with the good state. The one must come along contemporaneously with the other. That is the way I put it. We already have the "best education," bundles of it! But the new realist will have no use for this present notion of acquisitive education: a teaching to possess knowledge like the Chinese, to store it in the brain for exotic emergencies; to classify and to catalogue, arbitrarily. He desires self-education: education from within, not from without; education without terms and holidays, without dictatorial designations, without prejudice against training the hand and the eye, in favor of long training in language rooms. The social invidiousness, embedded at present in the schools, is an inevitable reflection of the society in which they exist — this society wants the "best education," just as you do, Judge Semyonov. The new education — pure, direct, and natural — cannot exist except under a new social order. It will come when it is wanted, when it is deserved. The Bolshevik does not want bourgeois education.

## JUDGE SEMYONOV

The Bolshevik does not want culture taught in the schools. He refuses to employ the old bourgeois teachers.

## MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

The Bolshevik does not venerate traditional curricula. The concern of self-education is to provide youth with stimulating contacts. Youth takes unto itself all too quickly what it finds within reach. No one is proper to teach in the new school who has knowledge all laid-out and ready-made to fit, like splints, the grooves of growing minds. The citizens of the Bolshevik state must be trained to think; *a fortiori*, the teacher must think; a man will not lightly become a teacher to young realists! And since the stuff of teaching is imitable human beings — the teacher teaching himself — the state must select teachers with the greatest care. Certain old bourgeois teachers do not meet this requirement. However, they might still be employed, if only out of pity, provided they did not seek the overthrow of the very foundation of the new school, the new state.

## ALEXIS

Yet it seems incredible that that class in the state which is the best trained — yes, even those men of the diploma school I railed at — must not be the ones to depend upon in such a time of the nation's stress as at present. May not the remedy for the shortcomings of this class be some such revolution in the methods of teaching young aristocrats as you

have intimated, teacher? The question back of my seeming conservatism on this point is: how, if the old aristocracy failed to make use of its advantages of superior training, can we expect the Proletariat to profit more by its "social equality" training? I suppose the answer to this question is involved in the very issue we debate: shall there be social equality or shall there not be?

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

That is the issue! In the new social order men and women will not be counted in the class of "aristocrats" according to their inheritance, but according to their merits.

FRANK PLAISTEAD

Professor, did I not hear you call yourself an aristocrat, a while ago? And you speak now of a "class of aristocrats!" I supposed the Bolsheviks would not allow classes of any kind.

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

We are becoming confused. Words are impeding the progress of our argument. I see it is now necessary to give the definition of Bolshevism, full-blown, and then to trace out its philosophy, subsequently, step by step. Bolshevism—if you must have it shorn of all the consolations of its political philosophy—is the instant breaking up of the present class system and the establishment in its place of a dictatorship of the Proletariat.

## VOICE FROM THE CROWD

Why should one class rule all the rest of us, Professor? I am studying to be a Felsher Doctor,<sup>1</sup> and —

## ANOTHER VOICE

The Felsher Doctors are forming a union!

## MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

This protest of one-class rule is but another attempt to evade the main issue. The Proletariat, by the implications of Bolshevik philosophy, is not one class; it is the body of all who exert themselves for, or contribute to, the commonwealth any value, material or spiritual.

## VOICE FROM THE CROWD

Long live the Proletariat!

## JUDGE SEMYONOV

The implications of Bolshevik philosophy! Philosophy? Fool-osophy! Your Bolshevik thinks only of one man — himself! He thinks only of the moment. For long views, for ideals you must go to the intelligent classes. Bad, selfish people you will find among them; nevertheless, will you not admit, Teacher, that as a class they are capable of acting for the good of "the whole"; that when they do act against that interest they are generally unconscious of wrong and act from good motives?

<sup>1</sup> The Felsher Doctors in Russia are men nurses.

## 200 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

One's motives are generally good: nature sees to that!

JUDGE SEMYONOV

Then isn't the simple remedy for the present ills of our states, to let in light; show our upper classes the larger goods they have not hitherto comprehended; convince them that the difference between them and their unwashed brethren is not so great as they have thought? Get the truth spoken — your truth of history, of government?

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

No! The remedy is not so simple. The class holding the political power to-day cannot see things except through diplomatic lenses. The younger men in this class would only in part receive the truth; many of this part who did receive the truth would, like our own Russian intelligentsia, refuse to trust the lower classes with the truth: rather, they would hold it to themselves till the lower classes should all have become upper classes — this moderate policy is the reverse of Bolshevism and it seems to me to be an impossible one, as many of them must know: there are not at present goods enough in the world to make all the low like the high. If we trust to the enlightenment of these present rulers, the world will continue on with the present injustices. The upper class has proved that it will not act with class-unselfishness. Therefore we must give up the illusions regarding it which we again and again have

built up; we must remove every vestige of these old class divisions, destroy them root and branch: the upper class, economically, must become lower class and share material power with all men and women.

**VOICE FROM THE CROWD**

We've had enough of our money-lords! I say, sweep the house clean! Let us not leave past dirt to remind the new tenant what a pig-sty his house has been.

**ANOTHER VOICE**

Kill the stuffed-pigs! We'll give man for man. If it is to be a war of extermination, it's easy winning for us!

**PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN**

Your Bolshevik friends, Teacher, are tracing out the implications of Bolshevik philosophy; isn't that so?

**JUDGE SEMYONOV**

Michail Sergeivitch, are you so sure that the upper class is not willing to share power with the people, anticipating far in advance their real capability of self-government?

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

If I were not sure twelve months ago, events since have made me terribly sure!

**ALEXIS**

What events, Teacher?

## 202 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Fresh history! Affairs in Finland, in Ukraine, here in European Russia! In Ukraine, the upper class, though badly beaten and relegated by the Red Guard, was determined not to let the power reside in its own people: it refused to coöperate with them and put at their service its own trained abilities. It preferred to coquet, first with French, and then with German class-help. As for Great Russia's bourgeoisie, I say only one word, Miliukov: for his kaleidoscopic performances he should be given motley to wear! In Finland, the White Guards triumphed with the aid of a German army. In revenge for the presumption of the Reds — by all accounts clearly the majority — the White Guards set out to suppress them by wholesale imprisonment, execution, exile, and the harshest measures of martial law: no meetings of workmen; not a Socialist organization allowed to raise its head — though before the war, the Socialist Party was the largest party in the country. The White Guards of Finland did all these things, they said, in defense of law and order!

### MAN FROM THE CROWD

What is a White Guard without a Hun or an Englishman behind him! He loves foreigners more than his own brothers.

### JUDGE SEMYONOV

Ivan Leonivitch, don't exhibit your foolishness in public; go home and get my bath ready!

(IVAN LEONIVITCH, servant to JUDGE SEMYONOV, leaves the crowd.)

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

And here is something to bear in mind, though it be unpleasant. Finland, though small, though this, though that, is not a peculiar people: its Red Guards are like lower class everywhere; its White Guards are like upper class everywhere. Particularly like the situation in Finland during the revolutionary régime is the Great Russia of to-day under the Bolshevik régime; and this let me say unreservedly, as a warning or a hope, as you prefer: if the upper class in Great Russia, especially, if with the aid, direct or indirect, of foreigners, overcomes a government of its own people, the lower class will mark that day and remember it and its lesson.

SEVERAL VOICES IN THE CROWD

Hear! Hear!

FRANK PLAISTEAD

Isn't foreign intervention better than the terror which exists in Russia to-day, which exists right here in Nishni Novgorod? I may be arrested as I go home to-night, and what boots it, if, after spending the night in jail, some commissar informs me unctuously to-morrow morning that it was all a mistake!

JUDGE SEMYONOV

The intervention of the Americans, at least, would not have the reactionary character of the German

## 204 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

help to the Ukraine and to the Finnish White Guards.

### PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

Why say intervention of the Americans, "at least"? How least are these intervening, "non-interventionist" Americans! Now, God knows, we should be glad enough of any assistance in getting rid of these Jewish despots of ours and in setting up a government of real Russians, as glad as were our brothers in the Ukraine and in Finland; but why "the Americans," especially! If it is because they would insure a "democratic" government, which is their specialty, I believe, I, for one, at any rate, am sure they would be "least" the proper nation to help us.

### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

You confess yourself reactionary!

### PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

Thanks, yes! What decent man in Russia is not reactionary to-day!

### JUDGE SEMYONOV

Don't take any stock, Frank, in what Pasha says about democracy. He belongs to the "Russia Party," which has the patriotic slogan: "Russia for the Russians." By Russians they mean only blue-blooded Russians. That is why they are the first to cry that there are no "real Russians" governing the country to-day. His party is a back number. We Social-Revolutionaries believe in a democracy developing gradually into such socialism as the

initiatory steps prove to be practicable. Perhaps not exactly the American brand of democracy — we understand that you are governed by politicians, Frank!

FRANK PLAISTEAD

We have the government we want!

PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

So we in Russia have always had the government we want. So have the Germans! They will have the Hohenzollerns as long as they want them.

ALEXIS

By that kind of logic, slaves have the masters they want! I don't believe the Germans want the Hohenzollerns any longer. If you had lived among, and talked with, the Germans in the later war years, as I have done, you would become convinced they are going to develop a wonderful democracy. I tell you the German people are thinking; they have learned their lesson. Certain writers in the Allied countries have expressed pity for the deceived German people; well, the Germans, in the meantime, believe the people in Allied countries similarly deceived. The German people begins to admit it has been deceived, and it is struggling for its own kind of "democracy." The German "Social Democrats," who are coming into power soon, are "Democrats," pretty narrowly "Democrats." They have no use for Bolshevism, and if it raises its head among them, they will be willing to ally themselves even with the capitalists in order to fight it.

(*The people of the park are in commotion, all heads turned upward. It is something to do with the hydroplanes. The whirring of a motor sounds quite near. The people in the café go out into the park. One of the aviators is practicing a new feat. From his machine he lets loose a flock of pink slips, which trail down on the wind like a shower of sparks from a large piece of fireworks. A slip which falls near the café is picked up by a man in the uniform of an Austrian war prisoner, standing near the men from the corner table. He reads it to them: "Proletarie vsekh stran, Soedeenaictis!"; Workmen of all countries, unite! The Austrian accepts an invitation from CHASTLEEVY to join the men at the corner table in a drink. The waiter brings seven beers.*)

#### BURTSEV, THE WAITER

(*Addressing the Austrian.*)

Tavarish, I wish we could drop some of them pink notes over on the people of your country. Guess, from the reports 'bout the strikes and so forth, your workmen are most ready to join ourn.

#### CARL MARDINBURG

(*Large, tall, and gladiatorial! A frank blue eye. He wears the uniform of a non-commissioned officer, kept neat and clean. On his coat is a large iron cross. His Russian, learned as a prisoner, is better*

*than PLAISTEAD's.)* I am not a Tavarish, Waiter! The first Russian Red Guard that tries to fly over our territory with such propaganda will discover that we have excellent anti-aircraft guns!

**PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN**

Perhaps Herr Mardinburg is one of these "German Democrats!"

**CARL MARDINBURG**

I am an Austrian Social-Democrat! I am a Socialist, a fighting Socialist; I have been a candidate of my party for deputy to the Reichstag. We will not recognize the Bolsheviks as good Socialists; they have traded upon our hard-earned gains, and bring our projects to bankruptcy. They block progress!

**BURTSEV, THE WAITER**

What is "progress," Gospadeen?

**CARL MARDINBURG**

"Progress" is approaching the state of Karl Marx. We Socialists expect to win our battle by negotiation with the capitalistic classes. We have been struggling with them since 1848; but at last we have assurances of a genuine parliamentary government; this much is won by our patience during the war.

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

*(Has been undecided just how to take the presence of the Austrian till his last words.)* You're darn hootin', the war will fix you people up, all right!

## 208 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

Just you see if you aren't rid of your autocracy!  
That's what we Americans are in this war for.

### CARL MARDINBURG

Thanks, we have not asked for your help. We should much prefer anything we have got to what you might give us. Some of you folks who are anxious to set up freedom all over the globe had better look first to home. You in America are the most capitalistic-ridden of all! Wages, in proportion to purchase-value of money, have fallen in the United States during the period since 1905, seven to eight per cent. Sixty-five per cent. of your people receive an annual income less than \$200 per capita, and have practically no property except their clothes and furniture. Only sixteen per cent. of your wage-earners are in unions. Our workers, on the other hand, are nearly all organized. We consider it important first of all to present a solid front of laborers within the nation; after that it will be becoming for us, perhaps, to rant about the solidarity of the workers of the world as do our Russian brothers.

### BURTSEV, THE WAITER

Ah! you do reckon us brothers, then.

### FRANK PLAISTEAD

My German friend —

### CARL MARDINBURG

I am an Austrian, sir!

## FRANK PLAISTEAD

Certainly, Austrian! So much the better! My Austrian brother, before you attack capital, why don't you first interest yourself in Democracy. Democracy must precede Socialism. Therefore, in helping to establish democracy you further your own cause. Why don't you workingmen of Austria help the Czechs and the South-Slavs in their struggle for liberty?

## CARL MARDINBURG

We have struggled for the liberties of our brother-workmen in the different parts of the Empire long before you Allied Democrats became interested in their lot. But we don't wish them to be separated politically for the same reasons that you do: separation would weaken Socialists of all parts of our country in their economic struggle with the Entente Imperialisms. If we are beaten in this war, our working classes will have put upon them huge indemnities, and our organizations, the best and most soundly socialistic in the world, will be ruined. So it is that we Social Democrats believe that we fight not only for defense of country, but for defense of socialism, as well.

## MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

It seems to me that by your attitude you Social Democrats are helping to ruin both country and socialism! You are the instruments of your ruling class, which, loving country as little as they love you, yet persuade you that you must fight for what they

## 210 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

call the country's defense. Be not deceived; it is their own defense, and the defense of their "system" against the ruling class and its system, in the enemy countries, you fight! Your capitalists have deceived you for long by keeping you workmen in different parts of the Austrian Empire at logger-heads with each other; and now they have you fighting against the workmen of other nations.

### CARL MARDINBURG

But we have nothing against the *workmen* in the allied countries; it is only against the imperialists.

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Your enemy workmen say exactly the same thing; with a substitution of the word "autocrat" for the word "imperialist." Moreover, since it is true, as you say, that your workmen in the Central Powers are the better organized, it was on you that we expected the new light first to fall. I say I am disappointed in you. You haven't had faith in your brother-workmen of the world!

### CARL MARDINBURG

Our brother-workmen weren't sufficiently organized. We have had to fight for them as well as for ourselves. We are realists. I suppose it is on your Russian workman the light has fallen!

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Our Russian workmen have the better realism. They believed in you and stopped fighting you.

That was a piece of the new realism. The Russian brothers did their part. Why didn't you do yours? You did repudiate the Brest-Litovsk treaty, but at the same time you have continued to support with a vote of war credits, the government that is crushing us with an iron heel; you continue to bargain blindly with the oligarchy that is shamefully misrepresenting you and filling nearly every one of your homes with mourning for needless bloodshed; all for sake of your will-o'-wisp principle of negotiation; your party leaders seek narrow party ends; the big opportunity to lead the workmen of the world, they fail to see. Many in your class and out of it, in Germany and in the enemy countries as well, are ready to work with German and Austrian Socialist leaders and help obtain for them all they seek and more — if only the light would fall upon them; if only they would act as independently as they have spoken! But lack of faith paralyzes them. The big opportunity will be seized by the leaders of a new body, the German and Austrian Bolsheviks; then we shall see which is the better realism!

#### ALEXIS

If some of the sturdy people I know join the German and Austrian Bolsheviks, there is going to be a revolution much better executed than ours!

#### JUDGE SEMYONOV

But none of your thinking Germans, Alexis, are going to become Bolsheviks. Indeed, they may share

their privileges otherwise. I think better of our class than you and Michail Sergeivitch do.

ALEXIS

That is because you do not ask so much of it. You are content that it should always be looking after itself alone! The rallying of a few of our class to Bolshevism would improve the quality of its leadership and change the character of the movement so that some of us might unreservedly coöperate in it. It will be for us to show the Bolsheviks that not all rich men are money-ridden, and that not all university-men are brain-warped; that, to the contrary, men of the upper classes may be of like passions with themselves.

JUDGE SEMYONOV

“Of like passions”! It is for this reason of like passions, of one class as of another, that I prefer the intelligentsia to rule: they have no more weaknesses than another class, and they do know something. If the mass has exclusively the power, it will be as selfish and as narrow as the Capitalists.

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

It will be, unless there is a new counteracting social morality at work in Bolshevism! Bolshevism is ruthless. It can hardly succeed without frightful and shameful wreckage, poor starts, and shoddy work. The naked political truths with which it deals, are two-edged swords that will slay the careless wielder. In righting economic injustices a tempta-

tion is placed before the opportunist Bolshevik. Already the Proletariat leaders are too much obsessed with ideas of the simple transference of wealth from one class to another. As they succeed to authority, they must be warned against the subtle abuse of power and the insidious corruption of riches. And woe to them if they betray a double trust!

#### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

I don't think the workers will double-cross their fellows. It would be breaking the first rule of the game. The difficulty will be to teach the new game. It will be natural for many of the Proletariat to play according to the rules of the rotten old game, which was the trading of favors all of a money character. You see we are all saturated with this money spirit. I've nothing against rich men. If only they would use their money as trustees! The damage to the commonwealth is not so much that some men have the money as that the money has them.

#### PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

The money gets into the hands of the cleverest men — and is spent by them for the good of all!

#### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

It is all very well to talk about trusteeship! That is laissez-faire! We have tried that. The present social stratification of society is the result. Something contradictory to the crudest notions of justice! We must try something else! As with biological changes, so with social changes, it is a case of

## 214 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

“must.” Those blessed by the amazing inequalities of the old system “must” give way! The war has hastened that “must” many years, by throwing the truth on a living screen of dying and blasted men. Our generation is so benumbed by commercialism that we are unable to measure just how much commercialism threw us into the war and just how much the war has pulled us up out of commercialism. But one thing is evident, we have a guilty conscience about our social inequality, and each party is falling all over itself, proposing immediate reparation to those not favored by capitalism — your conservative talks social amelioration as loudly as the next man!

### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

Teacher, do you hold the opinion with some that the war is a punishment for the commercialism of our generation?

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

I ought not say — I am of this generation, myself! But that this war is a field on which the moving spirit of our present civilization has found its apotheosis and best exemplification, I cannot doubt. And I think we must admit that money-making plays no insignificant part in the modern spirit. To build bigger barns is the ideal. Success is measured by material prosperity. The young man may have his visions, perchance, while at college. A year out of college, he sees only the glamour of what all men strive for. He hardens and nerves himself till he too has

acquired certain goods; then, in the degree to which he has become "successful," he is at ease, cushioned by material things. And having employed the boundless energy of youth in acquiring this standard of comfort, he has been delimiting his interests till he comes to a point where he can no longer adjust himself to the new; ignorant of the brave secrets of Youth, he despises it; he becomes conservative at thirty, say! Out of the men schooled with these ambitions, few can be recruited to take up the tasks of the new political realism. Such men live within their own so-called *laissez-faire* realism. Talk with these men about it and you will discover all sorts of odd fancies and inconsistencies, which crop up, one by one — the more particularly if your conversation is with a man old in the system, who has been unusually successful. So, I say, and it is only just now, war-taught, I say it: the present class divisions "must" be erased. With surprising rapidity will make their appearance new class divisions according to the deep natural differences between men. The present division into richer and poorer is false altogether! God makes men this and that; He never makes them rich and poor. He never fore-ordained it that some should be blessed with power and opportunities by the very reason of being rich men.

#### JUDGE SEMYONOV

Surely you will not rail, as does this privileged press of ours, at the Bourgeoisie! The Bourgeoisie are the intelligent and useful people, the plain bul-

## 216 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

wark of society. A country is just so strong as its middle-class.

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

I hesitate to say it, Judge Piotr Vassilievitch; I hesitate, because you will not understand me, but I do say: "Away with the Bourgeoisie!" I do share with the Bolsheviks a hatred of everything Bourgeois!

### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

Teacher, there must be a great deal behind what you say! I cannot yet comprehend how you can think the thoughts of raw men. There must be a great deal behind what you say!

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

There is my whole life behind it! . . . I say this is not the time for compromise. Middle-class-ism has failed egregiously! Let this war be its last, as it is its consummate, orgy! The Bourgeoisie exemplifies the concentration of pride in riches. When confronted with the necessity of a choice, it prefers Mammon. Almost any pride is more sufferable than "purse-pride"; pride of country, pride of strength, beauty, or mind — all these express durable values. But to sit self-satisfied with the possession of house and land is of all abominations the most damnable! Why pride in house? The owner did not plan or build it. He drove a bargain with a good architect. Not a slab, not a stroke of paint in the house stands to the owner's credit. But when he takes another rich

man through it and the guest enumerates its excellent points, the owner expands with elation, and takes to himself the glory of the good work. Deluded fool! the echoes in the wide corridors mock him for his emptiness! Or consider pride in dress! The lady has taken a fashionable dressmaker to counsel; she has procured materials of high cost; she is lavish in order that the gown may reflect her station, or a little anticipate her station. Her own personal beauty and grace, if she happens to have them, are mocked by her vanity.

#### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

Riches are not always a mockery to their possessors. Rich persons may do for the public what it could never afford to do for itself. They may make of their possessions collections of the beautiful objects in the world for all to enjoy.

#### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

But who appointed these persons to be public benefactors? By what justice shall a Rockefeller or a Rothschild give or withhold?

#### JUDGE SEMYONOV

How can you blame the rich for being what they are! Why shouldn't they control their wealth till the proper time, when, by graduated laws preventing great suffering to the innocent rich, excess wealth can be distributed?

#### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

We do not blame the rich for the whole system,

nor do we expect them individually to surrender control of their share under it. But, on the other hand, when we come collectively to abolish inequalities, the rich must not expect to be shown favors. They are not anaemic! I suppose you look upon the laws forcing the Bourgeoisie to work as the refinement of cruelty. In Russia where our upper class is exceptionally idle, I hold such laws especially commendable. They impress upon the Bourgeoisie the reality of the wiping out of class distinctions. For the laws are not that the rich shall work; they read that *all* shall work. There should be no "rich" to devise "fatigue-duty" for; to legislate for, to graduate taxes for! Let there be one class, call it what you will: the proletariat, the voters, the community! When there is only one class, the talk about the harmony of the classes, and the sweet dreams of the union of capital and labor, will be out of fashion.

**ALEXIS**

You would have capitalism go smash!

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

Abolish capital! Abolish the whole blame shooting-match of society! Impossible! Even your savage owned his own tomahawk.

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

But "your savage" didn't own the hunting woods nor the fishing grounds. It is the possession of capital over and above individual need that I mean

by "capitalism": the ownership of one man greater than the ownership of another man in such a degree that the greater owner can be termed a "rich man." The abolition of capitalism does not mean the interruption of all property rights, nor does it put a tax upon the different forms of saving. It does not bring to an end the classes of merchants, bankers, and lawyers; the merchant becomes a better merchant, the lawyer a better lawyer; the property of each is handled, however, subject to the new understanding of social equality.

#### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

H. G. Wells says that we are not to tell the rich young man to go and sell all that which he hath and give to the poor. He must keep it, rather, as a sacred trust. And if any rich man is not willing to handle his riches as a trust, he must surrender it without a day's delay.

#### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

I prefer Jesus to Wells, there! In most respects we cannot improve upon the communism of Jesus. Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God." There is no reservation made that rich men may enter the Kingdom as trustees. The language of Jesus is strong. Such language is not used in the churches to-day; the gospel has been interpreted by a commercially-minded clergy for a commercially-minded laity. Seeking to commend Christianity to their pew-holders, the clergy have it

revealed to them that the whole sum of the teaching of Jesus is symbolical. They promise their Sunday-frock congregations that their personal consecration to Jesus is a blanket insurance for their earthly goods: it does not matter how one gets money; only one must do good with it; in so doing he will be rewarded by the prayers of those who receive his charity, etc. The Bolshevik takes Jesus at his word; he finds the religious message of Jesus all cant without a literal interpretation of his social commandments. Jesus would not compromise with the rich man; neither will the Bolshevik! Jesus made his social teaching the beginning of the wisdom he would show unto his followers. The Bolshevik makes the creation of social equality the first statute of the new realism!

The horror with which men look upon the introduction of social equality is an index of the thinness of their blood! The rich man who is sincere in maintaining that he holds his wealth in trust should have no fear of communism: for communism is but the extension of the principle of trusteeship. Nor need he fear he will not continue to be an aristocrat: he can demonstrate that he is one in some path of the spirit; and whatever abilities he possesses will shine of their own luster and be recognized, at least in the fraternity of the best men where he would be most proud to have them recognized. In Plato's Republic the leaders, the philosophers, were to live the most simple life; luxuries were to be the portion only of the artisans — they would corrupt the best men!

Social equality is as essential to securing the richest life to the best men as it is to securing the richest life to those of few talents. The best man, busyminded, will irk the distraction of the sheer display of badges of distinction. The full mind is not covetous. That those both of quick and dull mind should all have stomachs satisfied, what offense! Why should not men eat and wash and dress, and otherwise satisfy the demands of the body, upon terms of equality?

#### FRANK PLAISTEAD

You seem just now to be saying the obvious, Professor! The upper class is willing that all should be properly fed and clothed, but this still leaves a goodly surplus. The war has shown, that by well directed economies on the part of the people, each country can amass an unbelievably large sum for national needs. After the war, as before, this excess wealth, call it capital if you will, should go to men according to their ability, natural or acquired, to use it. Of course there will be injustices here and there; that is inevitable under any system. But prove to me that another system will work with less injustices, all told, and I, for one, am willing to give it a fair trial!

#### ALEXIS

How can we know that a system will work till we have given it fair trial? The conditions upon which you would welcome reform, Mr. Plaistead, it

seems to me, are the impossible or emasculating conditions for which your conservative always stipulates. For my part, I see that the old must give way to the new; I am persuaded by the good sense of social equality, as the Teacher defines it; and, further, I believe that the world cataclysm has swept us a long distance toward it. But I cannot see my way to wish too violent changes; for example, the striking down of capital in one generation. You are a great believer in social evolution, Teacher. Now, do you not think that social evolution, which has been phenomenally rapid in this century, will bring the full social equality which you describe, naturally and without countless suffering, even sooner than one would expect! The strain of political upheaval has already cut thousands of individuals off from their past and lost them their happiness. Should we pile misery on misery by forcing extreme steps? Must not people accustom themselves to the new order gradually, in the meantime not too much pressed with the wearing demands of the new, to live out their lives normally and joyously! This is where my chief quarrel with Bolshevism lies; I suppose it is a small point and I am over-sensitive.

#### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

And this is my quarrel with Bolshevism, Teacher; not a small point at all to my mind! The Bolsheviks look like barbarians to me. I fear they won't allow the beautiful things to remain in their places; and that, worse still, they won't allow me to continue

to create beauty after the patterns in my own heart.

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

The rottenness of the whole present state you all admit: Mr. America, you would patch it; and you, Alexis and Chastleevy, would temporize with it, give it leeway to bring us again on the rocks! Plaistead, the ship is beyond repair, I assure you; it is a rotten hulk; it will fall to pieces of no force at all in one good storm! And I assure you, Chastleevy, that the destruction done by the Bolsheviks is of the ugly, not of the beautiful! The beauty achieved at the expense of unbrotherliness is unhealthy and false. If you have the enduring interests of art in mind, son, then accepting what must be, join in the Bolshevik movement; be one to modify its character your way; see the amazing beauties which by the quickening of all forms of social activity it will call forth! As for the amount of misery Bolshevism brings, I assure you, Alexis, that however great, it cannot be compared with the amount of happiness Bolshevism will bring! Look out on the path now! There is an illustration of what the Bolshevik "extreme steps" lead to. (MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH *points to a young man and a young woman slowly sauntering, arm in arm, past the café.*) There is Anna Rudina enjoying the evening with her lover, Nicolai Novamuschenko. That pretty dress she wears was just made with her own hands: they say she is very proud of it, and so is Nicolai, too; it is the result of lessons from her former dressmaker; her father cannot afford to

have everything done for her any longer. Who says she is not happier in spite of her loss of caste! Her father had turned young Nicolai away from the house when he discovered that Anna was beginning to care for him. Poor boy, he was an exceptionally bright lad, but he was only her tutor. Now the social gulf fixed between the lovers has been bridged.

#### PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

Now he is our distinguished commissar of education.

#### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

Whatever you may say, Pasha, there are those about town, even in the Rudin set, who freely declare that Nicolai is a better man for her than her father's choice, to wit, you, yourself, Pasha. Come now, Pasha, shouldn't you have been glad to take the girl — before she lost — caste, eh!

#### JUDGE SEMYONOV

I can see in the misfortunes of the Rudins but one of many instances of the economic waste and ruin of Bolshevik rule. And it isn't for such as the Rudins the misfortune is greatest; it involves as well the Russian workmen and peasants. You believe me, gentlemen, when I say I have the interest of the workmen really at heart.

#### BURTSEV, THE WAITER

Yes, we believe you, Judge. We know that you were a leader in the fine work of the Novgorod Zemstvo. And when there was much suffering from lack

---

of work two winters ago, you organized a powder shop to provide idle men with employment.

JUDGE SEMYONOV

Well, Rudin was the citizen who contributed the most capital to the new powder shop, wasn't he? Now Rudin is a splendid fellow for all such undertakings. His judgment is unerring. It was he convinced us it was a powder plant we wanted: he said a powder plant would not entail exorbitant initial cost, and its output could be adjusted nicely to the amount of idle labor we found.

CARL MARDINBURG

You don't mean to argue that private capital is the only means of solving the problem of unemployment. Certainly state registration of the unemployed, as we have it in Austria, is a more thorough remedy.

JUDGE SEMYONOV

I am not arguing any such point! I merely wish to show what a waste of community wealth it is, to put a man like Feodor Rudin on the shelf as the Bolsheviks have done. There's his brewery now, idle, earning a living for no man! Almost every one of our factories has been crippled or absolutely ruined by these tavarishes!

ALEXIS

Nonsense, Judge, not so bad as all that! Don't blame the Bolsheviks for all of the disorganization;

## 226 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

it began under the old régime; no one reckons just how far the old crowd brought the country to its last legs! Rudin's brewery was already running down by the time of Kerensky. Anyway, the Bolsheviks have closed all the breweries and distilleries on principle; and I'm glad of it.

### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

And I don't like the principle! Good wine never harmed me.

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

This café here, one of Rudin's smaller undertakings, is not suffering under Bolshevik management: we would all agree that Burtsev does very well with the place since his elevation from head-waiter to proprietor. Make money, too, don't you, Burtsev?

### BURTSEV, THE WAITER

*(Being free for a time from the needs of customers, has drawn a chair up to the table. He is an active little animal of twenty-five. He limps from a wound received in the war. His snappy black eyes show anger or pleasure quickly.)* Oh, I have no kick coming! I have got married, and Marsha and I, together, live better than I ever did, alone. If I do say it, the café is as well managed as before. But there's The Metropole, Rudin's large restaurant up-town, that the waiters are running poorly. Vladimir, who was head-cook, doesn't know enough to run a restaurant. He doesn't understand buying, he charges too little, and he allows the place to go

looking like a kitchen. He tries hard to make a success of his new responsibilities, but he and his wife are not so well off as before — and they have more children. Vladimir told me yesterday that he intends going to Broderensk, Rudin's old manager, for advice; I think it would be better if he gave over to young Leonid Petrovich, the clerk. Petrovich after a little would be able to run a good restaurant, even one so fine as that The Metropole used to be.

JUDGE SEMYONOV

Man, aren't you sensible enough to see that society cannot afford experiments made by these second-rate leaders! Society is most prosperous when individuals are subordinated on an ascending scale. Bolshevism turns things upside down, puts men of inferior abilities on top. In any political realism I recognize, men must take the places assigned them by ability. I confess I don't understand the Teacher's new realism; it is Utopian fantasy, I think!

CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

I understand realism not at all, either old or new!

JUDGE SEMYONOV

Though skeptical of futuristic realism, Teacher, do not put me down as the friend of unregenerate *laissez-faire*. As a Socialist, I believe in many modifications of the natural competition in business. I advocate wiping out the present injustice in the distribution of wealth. The right to inherit I would leave only to dependents; unearned increment I would

## 228 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

prevent altogether. I advocate the utmost publicity in the dealings of all nations, large businesses, and organizations of a public nature. But, after all are given a fair chance and a fair start, a field where there is no underhanded dealing, no speculation markets and fraudulent advertising,— then I say let individual competition reign, and reveal what return individuality, and special aptitude and training, will give!

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

These measures you Social-Revolutionaries propose differ from Bolshevism only in degree and in the ardor and in the method with which they are to be prosecuted. You would have publicity of a defined sort: in the dealings of nations, large businesses, and semi-public organizations. The new realism would have thrown on every department of human life and relations without limitation the glowing light of science: testing, weighing and comparing human valuations with infinite patience and utter lack of bias. For example, you say, Judge, you would grant the right to inherit to dependents only. The new social science would want to inquire further about these "dependents."

### FRANK PLAISTEAD

Absurd! That a man may not leave behind to his family what he has hard-earned. What incentive to work would remain, pray?

## PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

Don't worry, Mr. America; your prospective father-in-law, Judge Semyonov, will arrange to have you and Sara Petrovna counted as "dependents." Anyway, Mamma Semyonov is not subject to any of these new theories, she will not scruple to leave her only child everything.

## MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Your watchword, "Let individual competition reign," right enough, belongs to the old realism, Judge, argue as you will it doesn't. To say that competition is ordained by nature because found in the present economic system as it has gained headway and taken its own course of development, is unfair to nature: the only natural thing about this system is its own cussed nature! It is unfair to say, when by certain laws of dollar-dom one dollar becomes two, that this is human nature. The new realism tries by looking behind the facts to see what human nature is.

## ALEXIS

Yes, it is much easier to see statistics and trade balances than to see human facts — to see, for example, that the boy in the shop is contracting tuberculosis owing to the needlessly unsanitary character of his work. The defender of the old system says the system is made to fit human nature; it seems to me that, on the contrary, it is a case of human nature being made to fit The System: The System takes human nature as a raw product, and keeps it raw.

## 230 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

Your old-system man relies on the principles of simple, unenlarged, animal biology, to prove any thesis, be it in the realm of politics, of economics, or of philosophy; with his theory of competition he explains all progress in the past; without competition in the future, he says, all will be waste and deterioration. He ignores what part coöperation plays in the development of human habits; he ignores, also, the fact that really intensive studies in the psychology of collective feeling and thinking are yet to be made. There comes to my mind one of Chastleevy's stories that shows well with what blindness and misplaced emphasis people are likely to work out survival laws. Tell us, Chastleevy, about the Suhona peasant woman's kasha!

CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

Teacher, I don't just see the bearing of that story!

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Anyway, you tell it, Chastleevy, and I'll explain the bearing!

CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

Well! This is the story of an experience out in the Suhona district one summer when I was visiting my friend Dmitri Constantinovich Kral. Dmitri and I were riding horseback over his estate one bright morning. The green river hills were cutting the blue sky sharply, and white fleecy clouds were sailing through the heaven as if just to add comfort and completeness to the picturesque landscape. We

came on the river road to a little cottage, surrounded by out-buildings of thatch, which was a favorite stopping-place with Dmitri. The peasant's children gathered round us, and Dmitri Constantinovich, patting them on the head, drew from his pocket a box of sweets and gave it to a curly-headed daughter whose madonna face still hangs in my mind. Then arrived the busy housewife and invited us inside to drink tea. We accepted the invitation as a matter of course, and I tasted the finest kasha I had ever known. "Your kasha is excellent," I said to the housewife; "tell me, please, how you manage to cook it so tastily!"

"It is not the cooking, sir," she replied with a smile, "it is the grain which is excellent."

"Tell my friend," interposed Dmitri Constantinovich, "how it is you grow such excellent grain." So she told me.

"For many years," she began, "it was my man's custom to pick the largest kernels as seed grain on our own strips. He thought in this way he would improve the quality of the crops from year to year. And sure enough, every year the kernels were larger and larger, and my man thought how clever he was: his grain kernels were larger than any in the district. But I was not so pleased. I did not like the large kernels to eat. I found it more and more difficult to make tasty kasha. So I said to my man Gabriel: 'Gabriel, I do not like your large kernels! I would rather have them small and tasty. Choose this year for our seed grain from lots which make

the tastiest kasha.' Gabriel in matters of cooking never disputed me; he heeded me, and planted the seed which I had selected. And the next spring he did likewise, and so on, till now our kasha is the tastiest kasha that you will eat in the whole district."

And now, good Teacher, I leave it to you to explain the parable of the Suhona peasant woman and the small and the large kernels!

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

The story illustrates the folly of supporting pleasing points in view in politics by the theory of competition. It is begging the question. It is confusing ends with means. To argue that the man who is richest, who is biggest for the number of barns he owns, is the best; to argue that the man won in a fair competition, therefore he must have the brains, he ought to succeed; that there is some justice in his obtaining power over others,—may be syllogistic, but it does not get us anywhere!

ALEXIS

What you say, Teacher, puts me in mind of certain views expressed in a book I have at the moment in my pocket, a piece of the dead propaganda matter which the agents of the different nationalisms have struck off by the thousands of copies and distributed broadcast in Russia, especially during the Kerensky days — President Wilson's "The New Freedom." Let me read a few passages I have marked. (He

*draws from his pocket a pamphlet with closely printed lines, and reads, interpolating explanations.)*

" All the fair competition you choose, but no unfair competition of any kind. And then when unfair competition is eliminated, let us see these gentlemen [the trust magnates] carry their tanks of water on their backs. All that I ask and all that I shall fight for [Wilson refers here to the campaign he was waging for the presidency] is that they shall come into the field against merit and brains everywhere. If they can beat other American brains, then they have got the best brains. —

" I know, and every man in his heart knows, that the only way to enrich America is to make it possible for any man who has the brains to get into the game. I am not jealous of any business that has *grown* to that size ['*grown*' is his italics]. I am not jealous of any process of growth, no matter how huge the result, provided the result was indeed obtained by the processes of wholesome growth, which are indeed the processes of efficiency, of economy, of intelligence, of invention. —

" In New Jersey [the name of a state in which Wilson either was at the time, or had been, governor, I take it] . . . the corporations involved opposed the legislation with all their might. They talked about ruin — and I really believe they did think they would be somewhat injured. But they have not been. And I hear, I cannot tell you how many, men in New Jersey say: 'Governor, we were opposed to you; we did not believe in the things you wanted to do, but now that you have done them, we take off our hats. That was the thing to do, it did not hurt us a bit; it just put us on a normal footing; it took away suspicion from our business.' New Jersey, having taken the cold plunge, cries out to the rest of the states, 'Come on in! The water's fine!' I wonder whether these men who are controlling the United States realize how they are creating every year a thick-

## 234 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

ening atmosphere of suspicion, in which presently they will find that business cannot breathe?"

There you have the democratic view. Only bring things out into the light! Publish income and tax statistics! It is not the actual injustice that the people mind; it is that they are not acquainted with the fact of the existence of injustice. This is not different in kind from the competition idealized by the German historians and philosophers.

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

They preach realism of a very gross sort!

CARL MARDINBURG

How much grosser than the realism practiced by the Entente diplomats, who have been deliberately stifling the legitimate desires of the Germans for colonies? The French militarists used the influence of the English and Russian governments to frighten Germany into acquiescence in the designs of French capitalists on Morocco.

ALEXIS

You German and Austrian Socialists should have known that the English are not all Milners, nor the French all militarists!

CARL MARDINBURG

But all the French and English and Russians who counted were capitalists; it was our capitalists that they were attempting to defeat, to be sure: these are all facts! But how else could you expect our

---

Socialists to express their fact than first to help our capitalism conquer the other capitalisms, and then to conquer it!

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

But you so-called German Democrats never saw the fact of the United States. We offered you a court of international justice where you might stand and plead your case.

**CARL MAR DINBURG**

We did see the "fact" of the United States, we came to see it as a fact auxiliary to the English-French fact. You Americans refused to keep court. This was because you also had a System, which was disturbed by the split in the European System. Since the war with Spain, your capitalists have aimed at the expansion of their democracy into something — like imperialism!

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

Something like the Athenian hegemony of the Americans! Cuba, Panama, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Mexico are to form a Delian Confederacy for the United States!

**ALEXIS**

The great crime all these Nationalists commit is that they lay so much stress upon the superiority of the man of their own race, language and culture, to lead the procession!

## MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

It's more than that, Alexis! The Nationalist not only says his countrymen are superior — but he also makes this an excuse to grab for his country whatever may make it richer!

The Bolshevik realism allows for startling differences between the German and the American, between the Englishman and the Russian; but, at the same time, stresses the fact of unity, the common interests: it allows for the development of separate cultures, but it stresses the fact that great literature and great art are universal; the great masterpieces are translated into every language. The Bolshevik principle of open diplomacy is an accounting of this sort of fact; if one people knows what the honest claims and needs of another people are, misunderstandings will be cleared away, the real conflicts will emerge, and the just claims and needs of each people will be legitimatized in so far as the balance of interest for the world brotherhood permits. It is clear that if the Proletariat should come into power all over the world, war would become very unlikely: for the workmen everywhere would have identical interests and needs; and the sufferings and losses on both sides in a war would be more apparently than now workmen's sufferings and losses.

## PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

You speak of interests and needs of workmen so seriously, Teacher, it's positively funny. One of

the first needs of workmen — even they — is money, capital, isn't it?

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

Certainly! Let there be capital available to all the workmen on easy terms. What better means to provide for this than the nationalization of banks, a Bolshevik measure! The Bolshevik aims to have a census of all the needs of the workmen, and then to meet them as expeditiously and as equitably as possible.

**ALEXIS**

And by "needs" you haven't in mind physical needs, alone; bread and butter!

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

Of course not! All the desires and fancies of men should be represented by an interest. Mind I do not specify that they be "normal," common,—democracy's regimen; I consider individual caprice just so much potential wealth; it has significance for our new political realist.

**PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN**

Libertinism! Sanine! How far do you go?

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

So far as the individualist is not anti-social!

**JUDGE SEMYONOV**

There is no doubt the libertine would readily enough accept your "new realism," as a good Bol-

shevik! You, Pasha, as a pleasure-lover, would accept it, if you already weren't in a position to enjoy privileges under the old system!

#### PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

You may take me for a worthless fellow seeking my pleasure, but I and my kind are few. To tempt all the untrained rabble to fall into a like worthlessness, as Michail Sergeivitch proposes, that is a serious matter. Restraining laws must be made by the aristocrats; the people will never discipline themselves. Think of the abomination of the Bolshevik divorce law. Why I understand that a man needn't be bound by his marriage vows any longer than the duration of the marriage ceremony, which is short enough now at the magistrate's office, God knows! You can't tolerate sex laxity in the people. It will produce laxity in every other sphere of life. The Bolshevik removes the restraint of the church, he removes the restraint of the law, and now he removes the restraint of conjugal and family duties. Your ordinary man of the street, tasting such liberties, will go to the devil in a short time!

#### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Perhaps you really believe that a man restrains his passions only when opposed by an iron law. We do not observe you and your pals observing any law in these matters: you enjoy pleasure by night, and sleep by day; and drink and eat, always, even now!

---

## PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

We have no difficulty in getting our wine still.  
It is a Bolshevik we bribe!

## MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Now you make fun of proletarian prohibition. You gentlemen will have your fling at every attempt at organized unselfishness! You are convinced of the depravity of us all. You are not, yourselves, bound by custom, but you like to see others so bound; indeed this subjection of theirs gives you with your super-morality, a sense of secret superiority. Accordingly, you lay stress on sex rectitude: those who depart from the code — to which you and your fellows pay homage only in name — for howsoever a relative good, receive the stinging blows of your whips. You talk much of sex. You read the literature which exploits it. You are reticent at one time that you may be prurient at another. And so when Bolshevism comes, menacing your whole sacro-cryptic attitude on sex matters, you rise up in all the tattered and half-broken majesty of your class self-righteousness against this arch-treason to the old sanctities; you declare that you will convict the Proletarian movement of sex-heterodoxy; and you imagine that this is to give the movement its "knock-out blow."

## FRANK PLAISTEAD

But, my dear Professor, just to unmask prudery and hypocrisy, you would not have us throw to the winds all decencies, and the regularities which the

## 240 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

accumulated wisdom of the race has shown to be a physiological necessity. The irregularities of the rich may be reprehensible, but, certainly, you will not carry your craze for social equality so far as to plunge the big mass of common people into excess and debauchery by permitting them the same freedom! Your radicals in all history run to Free Love. Sensuality takes the place of religion with them; they worship the Beast! And the Bolsheviks show the weakness of true radicals in this respect as in others.

### ALEXIS

With what debauchery can you charge the Bolsheviks? You have witnessed ten months of the rule of the Proletariat. Have you seen excesses, have you seen drunkenness, have you heard of a reign of debauchery?

### PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

Now don't try to paint your hooligan friends as angels, Alexis. I was in Petrograd the first night of the revolution. I heard how the soldiers burst into the Winter Palace, stole the jewels and gold, and how several were found the next morning floating, drowned, in pools of wine in the wine cellar!

### BURTSEV, THE WAITER

If one wished to tell scandal of the Winter Palace, Pasha, one needn't begin at the first night of the revolution! You are not the only witness of the first days of the revolution. You would throw dirt

on the whole idealism of the Russian people during that mad first-taste of freedom. You dare not charge that the mass of us conducted ourselves in a reckless way. You might recall the watchword of those days that passed from mouth to mouth among us: "Be sober, be worthy of freedom!" You know that the soldiers who did disgrace the people's honor were savagely attacked.

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

But this state of the people's Puritanism did not last long! Human nature is human nature! The Bolsheviks got tired of their own lofty idealism, and now each man of them strikes out for himself. I know one commissar in this city who has nearly enough money scraped together to go away with. How is it that your Bolshevik justifies riding, himself, in first-class railroad wagons, occupying the logia at the theatres, monopolizing the automobiles of the city, requisitioning for himself the finest residences!

**BURTSEV, THE WAITER**

The devil! I don't see why a Bolshevik shouldn't ride in a first-class wagon, if he chooses to spend his money on that particular comfort. And as for the fine houses — in which any one family would get lost, I should think — if they are not suitable for schools or hospitals, then why shouldn't the commissars have the luck of living in them; and have automobiles, too; you wouldn't destroy these fine things, would you! All the fine buildings, the lovely

church towers and monasteries at a distance, the big factories, brilliantly lighted in the late afternoons of winter, the furs and jewels of women,— all these things we fellows like; we do not destroy them! We look long at such beautiful pictures as Chastleevy paints; it is only the portraits marked with the imperial arms that we destroy! — Well! I must hurry away to wait on Misha and Pavel, the two sailor boys over there; they want their fourth ice-cream; it is a habit with them to eat four of an evening; and if they pay for them, why shouldn't they have them!

(BURTSEV *hurries away to wait on the sailors.*)

#### JUDGE SEMYONOV

Burtsev is your idealist from below! We all know what a thoroughly good chap he is, and what a sensible one, too! The Russian Proletariat, if represented by such men as he, instead of by the irresponsible extremists that now have their party in hand, wouldn't be so bad, you know! True enough, since the revolution, the masses have attacked those who were caught in drunken brawling, or looting, or in any other act of taking advantage of popular rule. Such is a people's idealism! It is fine to think that at heart the common people know what is decent, what is fit to keep, what is fit to throw away! We intelligentsia may rely on them to support the right measures — indeed, we shall need their support, if the right is to triumph. Moreover, I think they

may be able to settle the great problems of industry, themselves; for it is their own problem, after all, isn't it!

When I was in London last, a friend, a Labor member of parliament, took me to see "The City," the old part of London. The most interesting sight to me was The Guildhall. Hanging from its time-darkened rafters were the lively colored banners of the carpenters, the masons, the shoemakers, the silver-masters, the bankers! I was thrilled! I pictured in my mind some larger hall where representatives of all a nation's labor might meet — where the real muscle and brain of the people might speak direct — that this should be the nation's governing body!

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

Thrilling indeed! But too idealistic!

**PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN**

Syndicalism!

**CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST**

It seems a shame to me that good Russians like the Judge and the Teacher, who fight for the same general principles, should quarrel over details of policy. What Judge Semyonov has just now said, sounds to me like an argument for a government by workmen; what more Bolshevism than this can the Teacher desire?

**ALEXIS**

This little difference between the positions of the Social-Revolutionary and the Bolshevik, Chastleevy,

may become great enough, ultimately, to divide the whole nation into two camps, and you and I will have to choose with which crowd we shall cast our lot. The Social-Revolutionaries, being the right party of the only two strong parties in the country, attract many of the conservatives into a coalition with them; they are patronized by the non-socialist elements, and will be persuaded that it is only polite to repay them with a compromise.

JUDGE SEMYONOV

Yes, there is a difference between us. We Social-Revolutionaries get along with other people; we recognize that there are "other people" to get along with. The Bolsheviks entirely ignore certain parts of the public, certain interests of all Russia together. The Bolshevik workman of course shouts and waves his cap for Bolshevism — Bolshevism puts his interest above all other interests. On the other hand, it is not so patently for the interest of intellectuals like the Teacher and Alexis to support a rule by the working class — unless just for the distinction of being humanitarian and "advanced"; these few choice souls are simply idealists, men to spin theories, to write books which may keep us men of affairs in mind of ultimate goals. Their only mistake is to try to associate themselves with politics, with the dirty, tiresome, everyday struggle to make the crowd move on,— to cajole, to teach, to compel it!

I never draw my conclusions as to the merit of any

public measure by the number of idealists supporting it. An idealist is a good man who judges everybody by himself. Now Burtsev here is a good Bolshevik; he thinks all his fellows are just as honest and unselfish as he himself. If all the citizens were like Burtsev we shouldn't need any laws at all. Ninety per cent. of them are not; they have to be watched and hemmed in by the law and its guardians. I have not been a lawyer for nothing. Many highly respected citizens come to me to be advised just how honest it is necessary to be to come within the law; they dodge taxes on principle!

#### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

You make a fine devil's advocate, Judge! They do say that honesty is found only among primitive and uncivilized peoples such as the Chinese and the Lapps. At any rate, we can vouch for the absolute honesty of Russia's old peasantry. Much of the dishonesty of the civilized Western peoples, in my opinion, is traceable to the bad customs of an economic system which in many respects resembles a gambling table. Even so, gamblers will play the game according to their own rules. Business men and lawyers have their own codes. And generally men will keep faith where they are trusted to do so. At the university a few years ago some of the professors, including me, decided to put men upon their honor not to cheat in our own examinations, and, since then, I believe that in our examinations the cheating has been the least. I know you will say that

because I am only a good man and an idealist, my support of Bolshevism can count neither for, nor against, it. Or, again, Burtsev is a Bolshevik, and yet, you admit a sensible fellow; so you put down his fault as idealism, he doesn't understand human nature! I am wearied with these arguments ad hominem. Why must we reason about principles wholly on the basis of personalities? What should it be for or against Bolshevism, that among the Bolsheviks are found liars, thieves, opportunists, churchmen, longshoremen, or idealists? Have you not idealists among the Social-Revolutionaries? What is an idealist, anyway? Isn't every man somewhat of an idealist? If an idealist is the man who works out the principles of action, who reckons with philosophy; if an idealist is the man in a movement who is there because a rationalist or religious, is the idealist negligible? It is a common mistake to suppose, because the work of the idealist is from mind to mind, from suggestion to deliberate plan, and as slow as any growth, that he is ineffective. But it may be just as well that this mistake persists: it gives the idealist an unsuspected leverage over his opponent.

#### ALEXIS

Can't one say, Teacher, that the idealist will be in great demand by the new political realism! These "facts," these truths of the human relationships—can they not best be observed by the type of mind peculiar to the idealist,—keen, imaginative, untrammelled by precedent or prejudice?

## MICHAEL SERGEIVITCH

Most assuredly Bolshevism has need of idealists! The greatest "facts" for the Bolshevik must be human love and human faith; the old system, though it had Christianity for a foster mother, lost sight of them; the new realism, they must stare in the face! Government, itself, is by faith; it is marvelous to what subtle social laws men will react. The idealist you will generally find is a man of faith, himself; he believes that love and faith are in human nature; he plans and acts with reference to these subtle, social laws that bind men. It is he, I think, who takes the natural course; and when artificial and unspiritual systems, codes, and governments develop, it is he who must call people back to the right course. The leaders of Bolshevism must be men of faith: Bolshevism is founded on the mutual trust of workmen, individually and collectively.

For lack of faith in their ideals, many well-intentioned, half-Bolshevik gentlemen of the Bourgeoisie fail to *advance* — to use a word which the Judge just now used ironically. They would like to join hands with the Bolsheviks; they assent to the principles of Bolshevism; but they stop on the edge of the stream and will not jump in. Good men! is it that you do not trust brothers of a different bringing-up; that you are deterred by class-pride; that you hesitate to sell all and give to the poor, and think: "What will become of me without my clean linen, my private library, and the background of refinement for friendship!" Alas! that you cannot

see that all these things would be added unto you, in counterpart, or, yea, even in greater measure, by an act of faith on your part.

The Bolshevik can accomplish marvels: he believes! Fantastic, misplaced, unquestioning, impatient belief, maybe; nevertheless, it is pounding and surging, ceaselessly, on and on, out of the depths of the ocean of humanity. Like a tidal wave Bolshevism will carry along with it the masses of mankind; there is the inevitability of social evolution in it. For these new social ideas, once they really have a hold on the masses, will be the first dictates to action, no matter how reasonable or unreasonable; they will gain the victory complete; they will reign potently as the religion of the masses.

Meantime, the Bourgeoisie become fatalistically inert. They refuse to believe that the people can do anything without their leadership; they forget the fecundity of the people to produce their own leaders when it needs them. In the English Rebellion of the seventeenth century and in the French Revolution, the people completely renounced its old leaders. Let our Russian Bourgeoisie — the clean scribes and Pharisees who write clever books and make pungent speeches — scornfully count, if they will, the day till their return to power; they may be sure that this present scornful self-importance of theirs is the only importance they will ever have! They are the old surface that covered the mouth of a crater; they are now the buried ones, buried be-

neath tons of burning lava that still flows straight from the very bowels of mankind.

**PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN**

Sansculottism! Hail Carlyle of the Russian Revolution!

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

The ideas of Bolshevism are working in the masses over the wide world like yeast! The war-lords contribute from their money-bags to stop the menace. They use the censor, the prison, and their echoing press. They fail to see that these are weapons of putty pitted against sharpest steel. It is unbelief pitted against belief! Just as it was at the time of the French Revolution! What though the Girondins had the best of the argument! They had learned to argue out of books and in my lady's parlor! But the Mountain was a yeasty place. There blood was thick. There Faith was not scant! The believers were sweaty and hot-hearted. They were moved from within, they knew not the working of the mystery. And something great and strong, born out of their belief, has endured down to the present generation, and now in its maturity, impregnated by a faith even more virile, has brought forth our Bolshevik Revolution.

**PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN**

And like the French Revolution, it will usher in a reaction, some such dictator as Napoleon. It is of quick growth, and it will have a quick death.

## 250 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

ALEXIS

Of course if you will look superstitiously to the past; if you will find in history only cycles —

PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

And why should this revolution be more permanent than others?

ALEXIS

Because this is 1900 and not 1800. Because the modern industrial workers are more intelligent and possess greater solidarity than the peasants and detached workmen of the past. Because this Revolution is a product of a war and its camp fields like nothing of the past. Understanding is being bred there. And strong feeling, too! These present revolutions will endure because they rest on the strong feelings of the masses; it is religion with them. They have been bankrupt in religion too long. Now at last they may discard a religion of sticks and stones, of crosses and icons, of theologies made ex cathedra out of the childish metaphysics of Syrian, Egyptian and decadent Greek, mystics and sophists — a medicine man's religion. The cumbersome old religion is being dismantled along with the armaments. Its charm is ceasing to work any longer. The new religion, which is replacing it, contains the germs of a genuine brotherhood: military force will only a little longer bid the workmen come and go; soon they will stir only when moved by a sense of duty inculcated by this new religion. The old re-

ligion divided men. The new religion must unite them; it must be catholic and international!

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

We've outgrown Catholicism; that's absence of thought. As soon as your workmen begin to think, there will be divisions in the church of the Proletariat. As now you have Orthodox, old believers, Baptists, and Atheists; so then there will be single-taxers, three-hour-a-day men, the skilled tradesmen, the syndicalists!

**ALEXIS**

The sect-phase has no place in the new religion! In many of our Russian churches one sees painted the seven councils of the church. Each council is represented as a trial scene. In the center is the Emperor; on his right hand sit the men of God with halos above their heads; on his left, sit the heretics, a black, defiant, interesting lot. So men have been declared right or wrong according to the decrees of the greatest hairsplitters. This is typical of the old religion as it is of the old political partisanship. In the future men will disagree in politics and in religion, but it must be as to real interests, and the interests of the Catholic brotherhood must always predominate.

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

It is very easy for young chaps like you to talk of the old and the new, as if the world grew up only with them. With you and your fellow-revolution-

aries, even God is out of date. You are all atheists or agnostics, I'll warrant. Now, confess, Gospadeen Alexis Zolodeen, do you believe in God?

**ALEXIS**

If we wish our dialogue of this evening to get anywhere, you must excuse me just now from any elaboration of my idea of God. But I need not spar with you: I may honestly say I do not believe in the God of Christianity. The war has been the greatest piece of atheism in all history: it puts out of countenance the God Christians worship. It denies that there is a God of men; it allows only for a God of the kings and leaders of people. The ruler of one people hurls his anathemas at another people in the name of God. But such a Divinity, called upon for victory and propitiated with the blood of hundreds of thousands of victims, cannot be a God of men, a God of human hearts. This God, the God of the war-lords, seems to me as hollow, as dead, as unresponsive to the prayer of a heated man as that Moloch of the Isarelites, compounded out of the gold and silver of an itching fleshliness. This God seems to approve of men according to the country they live in, or the amount of property they possess. The Bolshevik speaks in the name of no such empty tribal God; he speaks for no national church; he builds up no philanthropic institutions at the dictation of a property-holding class.

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

You have gone far enough, young man! One can

readily see that socialism and religion are all one to you. You overlook the fact that the Christian God you so lightly dismiss has prevailed during all these twenty centuries of civilized man on earth!

#### ALEXIS

The Bourbons reigned long, and the Romanoffs long, during all the years of civilized Russia. But when the last Czar's crown fell, with it fell that veneration for the crown-bearer which was supposed to be ineradicably planted in the Russian people: they were ready for something purer and truer to venerate. The Christian God has also been thought to stand absolute and fixed forever, with certain permanent qualities, among the European peoples. But with the advent of a new religion of the people, such a God, an improved Israelitish Javeh, is cast into the lumber-room where the socially outworn and vestigial usages of the race lie, forgotten by all except the scholars and romancers. The God of the new religion must not be an old man contemplating what fine thing he has done; but live and growing, a young God, strong and beautiful and passionate—to direct us as we go on with him creating a better world! Look, look! here comes the beggar's girl again, to-night. Her singing is of the new religion!

*(There has approached a BEGGAR, a sturdy old fellow with staff in hand, accompanied by a young girl. The girl sings in front of the café. She is like some fresh wild thing from the country! Not sweet; rather her manner*

*is tragic and beyond her years. She is mysteriously detached from her singing, her mind seems not to be in the park at all. Yet she captivates those who listen in the thick circle already crowded around her. The young men are fascinated not only by her voice, but by her figure, as well: for, as she sings, she dances, wildly tossing her arms. Her long black hair is beautiful! These men who are held spell-bound by her have, to use the common expression, "gone to the gypsies." After the singing the old man passes the hat. He comes upon the veranda and to the corner table.)*

**CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST**

Tell us, father, is yonder girl who has fascinated us with her singing, your granddaughter, or other relative of yours?

**THE BEGGAR**

She is my granddaughter, Nastya, my son Vassili's girl. Do you enjoy her singing?

**CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST**

Very much! I have not enjoyed singing so much in a long time! Have you been walking the way of the world long, father?

**THE BEGGAR**

You seem interested in me, sir! Would you really like to hear my story?

## SEVERAL

Yes! Tell us about yourself!

## THE BEGGAR

I have not always been a beggar; I was a beggar when I was young, and I am one now that I am old, but for twenty years I was a landholder. My father was a serf on the estate of Nicolai Vladimirovitch Tyzenbak, twenty versts from Nishni. I did not like the plowing and sowing and reaping on the estate. When I was in the fields I would feel very lonely and very far from God. The City seemed to me a happier place and so to the city I came. Is it not strange that I should so dislike the country, having lived there myself as a boy, while Nastya, my granddaughter here, she prays to live in the country? She is always dreaming of being a peasant's wife! Well! When I came to the city I found that very much I loved to be on the streets where always are many people passing and it is merry, and so I became a walker of the world. I chose to stand all day near the holy shrine of Saint Sergei. Many happy years I spent so. I married.

Then the people who make our laws at the city of Saint Petersburg made a new law, under which, so my friends in the country informed me, I received a share in some land on the Tyzenbak estate which had fallen to our family. It made me proud to be a landholder, and that day I heard of this I burned a large candle at the shrine of Saint Sergei. I returned to the country and remained ten years, but

all that time I longed very much to be back on the city streets. So I let Pavel Ivanovitch take my small strip of land and pay me rent out of every harvest. On this rent and the profits from selling little articles at the bazaar, I made a living for myself and my orphaned granddaughter, Nastya. Then came the present Czars to rule in the city of Saint Petersburg, and they made new laws and took away my land in the country, because, as they said, I was only a landholder; I did not plow and sow and reap myself, but took rent from the harvest. So now I have to walk the world again, for I cannot make enough roubles at my little stall in the bazaar to keep myself and Nastya, my granddaughter, when the price of bread is more than five roubles a pound.

#### JUDGE SEMYONOV

Michail Sergeivitch, here you find another peasant who hates the Bolsheviks! You know, father, of course, that it is the Bolsheviks who have done you this injury!

#### GUEST AT ADJOINING TABLE

Father, beware of the counter-revolutionaries who take a sudden interest in your welfare! The Bolsheviks will drop money into your hat as often as any people.

#### A SECOND GUEST

(*A companion to the first.*) Don't deceive the old man, Theodor! The Bolsheviks are going to keep beggars off the streets — in the public interest!

## THE BEGGAR

I know little about Czars, gentlemen! God gave me the land in the country and now God has taken it away! I thank you for your kindness, gentlemen. God bless you!

(*The BEGGAR rejoins his granddaughter, and they both move on.*)

## PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

This man of your people, Alexis, seems not yet to understand that God and the Czar are socially vestigial!

## ALEXIS

The old man does not understand, but the girl who sang, will. Last night I heard her singing some revolutionary songs to a large crowd; she wasn't singing for money only! Her singing is a piece with Mordkin's dance of the Italian Beggar, which we saw him do when he was here on his last Volga tour. The Great Revolution is all there. First the beggar is represented as dejected, as without idea, as unawakened. Then bursts upon his mind his real occasion to feel proud and glad, and, waving his red scarf, he dances with abandon, he dances out the happiness in him!

## CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

He spends the riches of himself!

## ALEXIS

Yes, he spends of himself! Did you ever experience the discovery of a depthless mine of gold all

within yourself: finer and purer than pure gold, usable, inexhaustible! It is a mad discovery! To sing, to dance, to make something beautiful, that is the only way to express one's unutterable joy! These revolutionaries are expressing themselves, good or bad, in Bolshevism. To the people in Europe who read of it, it may appear silly; but to us who witness it — to me, it is very human! alive! and freshly born! it expresses what before had been only a hope and a belief! It is like dancing and singing! Mordkin expresses its exaltation! The beggar's granddaughter expresses its freshness and wildness, its strength and its weakness!

#### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

Alexis, you, yourself, express the Revolution! Through you, I see something I did not know was in Bolshevism before. You speak as a poet about it; your speech is alive and freshly born!

#### ALEXIS

I speak as I myself feel it. Before it came, I only know how many times I felt dejected; how continually I felt hampered and repressed by those religious and cultural norms which seem to rest lightly enough on others, but are, to me, intolerable, because in direct opposition to what tells me in my own heart is beautiful and true. Perhaps what tells me in my heart of these beautiful and true things, is God. But it is too awfully human, I think; it cannot be a deity: it is so much a part of me; it seems like hav-

ing somewhere, safe and always accessible, the freshest, most fragrant and altogether lovely Spring Garden where I may walk and feel absolutely free; feel first one thing, and then another — I feel that I am an exquisite rose, a bluebird flying through the air, the last notes of some short theme of Tschaichovsky! And so I have good feelings, which my Divinity approves, when I hear this beggar girl sing; when I see Mordkin dance; when I visit Chastleevy's studio and watch him paint, and hear him talk about his work as if no one ever before painted anything quite so fine! Also, when I listen to The Teacher: he is a real teacher who every day sees some new thing the like of which was never before, but before was something a little less, something a little less significant; he sees in what plain soldiers and shoemakers do and declare remarkable evidences of his theories; and all his theories are so simple and tentative; what he holds to-day he may enlarge, diminish or wholly dismiss, to-morrow.

And in the same way I like these Bolsheviks immeasurably well; I cannot tell why; but that within me which is continually telling what to like, tells me the Bolsheviks are interesting! So I watch them. And, as it is the way usually, what I watch and study I take into my heart. When I see the Red Guards marching, and when I read in the bulletins that they are meeting with success, I am elated. I hang around the parks where they are holding festivals, and I stop and watch their "praetorian guards" dash down the streets in the automobiles that they

have taken from the Bourgeoisie, and I smile; and when the man beside me says "what rascals!" I repeat "what rascals!" but I have a different meaning; it is of no use to explain to him the difference of meaning, for then we should discuss and discuss, and he would describe many foul Bolshevik deeds and many foul Bolshevik men.

All the same, I find myself secretly wishing to be a Bolshevik! I wonder, should I have my wish, should I still have my Spring garden to walk out into! Of late, I become more and more convinced that there is only one way to keep always within walking distance of that garden, and that is to seek unfalteringly such master-joys as I find: joy in the singing girl, in the man like Mordkin possessed with some mad conceit, in active minds like Chastleevy's or the Teacher's. So I shall continue not to be ashamed to rejoice when the Red Guards go by, and to think as well of the new rulers as it is possible. And I shall continue to believe that the Great Revolution has something to do with the greater happiness I have enjoyed since it happened: I feel decidedly less hampered and repressed!

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

It is the poet of us who has been speaking!

FRANK PLAISTEAD

Perhaps so! That may explain why I have not understood perfectly. I never was strong on poetry — gardens, Spring, the bluebird's last notes, and so on! I do not understand this heart-acceleration of

Alexis at his "Great Revolution"; I must confess I can't see anything poetical about dirty revolutionaries.

**PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN**

Just read Shelley, Plaistead! "Prometheus Unbound"!

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

Prometheus and Shelley may be good Bolsheviks for all I know; I do not pretend to be acquainted with the leaders of such movements. But, damn it! I can't see why your first revolution — the March Revolution — wasn't poetic and "great" enough to give play to all the exuberance of you excitable Russians!

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

We Russians are not excited about Mediocrities! There is no exuberance, except that of comedy, about a sham revolution. The blind ones, the self-involved intellectuals, those slow of heart — to them the March Revolution was just right; neither too hot nor too cold, served up in a dish neither too large nor too small! The Bourgeoisie wanted their own little revolution, of course. The Capitalist plays the revolutionary game: he is out for the same objects apparently as the true revolutionary; only when he gets near the goal he will never put the ball over.

**JUDGE SEMYONOV**

How can you pretend, Michail Sergeivitch, that the March Revolution was conducted by capitalists! We Social-Revolutionaries were behind it. Who are

the true revolutionaries, time and intelligent Russia will decide. We Social-Revolutionaries offer the same promises to Russia as you; and we are more likely to fulfill them. For we educated people control the agencies of the Past, we have the key to the treasury of the Past. Tell me, learned Teacher, how can a people live, one with the other, without law! Law is evolutionary; the law of to-morrow must be based on the law of to-day. Your Bolsheviks are anarchists: they recognize neither time nor measure; they only destroy, they cannot replace. They rend the temple of the law and there is among them no master who can rebuild it.

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Rend the temple of the law! That temple is already crumbling. The great modernists of the law, the sociological jurists, have long been undermining it, doing to the law what the higher critics did to theology. Let me carry the analogy between law and theology still further! I have heard you say, Judge, that the church is but a shell; that its theology is based on an error, made at the Council of Nicea, and that since then the trinitarian dogma has led the churchmen a merry chase through numberless tomfooleries. And when the hierarchy of the old Russian church was overthrown a year ago and the radical priests were set up in power and donned the brilliant robes and the bishops' miters, you declared in a burst of religious fervor: "Why such fuss over half changes; why not wholly clean the house of

God at once and be done with mummery, the chanting of sonorous nonsense, the kissing of icons, and other parade and pageant of a sensual religion!" Didn't you say something like this, Judge?

JUDGE SEMYONOV

I said all of that! Mind, I'm not an atheist, but I am out of all patience with the archaism of our Russian church.

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

No less, Judge, am I out of all patience with the archaism of our law. I think the law is an empty shell; that the prevailing property-right theories of recent court decisions are based on an error; that the law got on the wrong track, was forced into the service of powerful commercial interests; that the early law like the early church was communistic; that it was the whole body of society that at first had the sole rights; private rights came later.

JUDGE SEMYONOV

And you would have law retrocede to that point where private rights began!

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Certainly not! The Bolshevik is the more, not the less, an individualist! There will be more law, not less, when the present bulky, wasteful, take-if-you-can, hit-or-miss system is supplanted. But, first, Judge, before we have more law, we must have less: we must indeed rend your temple of the law,

## 264 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

already topheavy! This body of law must perish, together with the System, alongside which, and in support of which, it has been built. For law shares the guilt of its partner; it wears the same ugly, grotesque face! We shall have to go back to natural law—just as we go back to natural religion! You admit we cannot piece out the old religion. Well! there is no more reason in evolution to graft the new law on the old than to graft the new religion on the old. New wine, you remember, friend, requires new bottles!

### JUDGE SEMYONOV

But how in the world do you make out that there will be more law under Bolshevism?

### MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

More law because of more competing interests! The inauguration of social equality will not produce the simplification you expect: when the conflict between the classes ceases, then, promptly, disintegration, horizontally, according to the thousand and one real interests of men, begins. The area and intensity of conflict subject to court jurisdiction will be increased: to meet the greater demand on it, the machinery of the law must become more elastic, and cognizant of finer discriminations. Do not fear, Judge, that the legal mind will want for exercise; on the contrary, a legal mind, which is not quick, original and flexible, will be valueless!

**PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN**

Trust these Bolsheviks to invent new laws! Look at any one of their flaming news-sheets! One-half, orders and decrees! There are more Soviets in the city than inhabitants! There is a commissar for dogs! There is to be one for the park pigeons! And some crazy night-shirter proposes one for styles of dress! Everything is by card or permit. You are correct, Teacher: the Bolshevik will multiply the laws — so much so, that there will not be freedom, even to die, without permit! I protest I prefer by far those happy lawless days under the easy-going administration of such public robbers as you and your legal fraternity, Judge!

**JUDGE SEMYONOV**

My fraternity would starve, Pasha, if it hadn't yours to feed upon! — Teacher, after all, you seem to give us lawyers no small place in your Proletariat state! You trace well the probable course of development of the law; only, if anything, you overrate the importance of the law in the society of the future. I should like to see less law; my idea is that law is but a makeshift for natural justice. Law holds people to what they ought to do unbidden. It prevents the giving of free rein to wanton desire and strength. It is the lack of law that explains the present anarchy. Your Proletariat has free rein; see what injustice prevails! Law is codified discipline. Tell me, Teacher, how do the Bolsheviks propose to maintain personal and public discipline?

## FRANK PLAISTEAD

That is a point which I think, also, is of major importance. Discipline is absolutely necessary, if a people keeps its own respect and gets business done! And will you pardon me a criticism of the Russians — remember I wish to speak cautiously, as always when I criticize Russia; of course, I really don't know her yet! — but it seems to me that the Russians as a people are very much lacking in discipline. This fact explains many of their weaknesses; though, perhaps it should be added, it accounts for some of their charms.

## PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

Ah! we have explained to us now, Mr. America, wherein lies the charm for you of our Russian women, from whom you choose your wife!

(BURTSEV *brings in a tray of bottles for the corner table. He stands at the shoulder of CHASTLEEVY; drinks half a glass of beer from CHASTLEEVY's bottle.*)

## CARL MARDINBURG

Lack of discipline is the vulnerable point in Bolshevism. Principle is one thing; method and results, another. We Austrian Social Democrats are pretty close to Bolshevik principles, but we stick to winning methods. We shall be the dictators of Austria after the war. It is by our inflexible discipline that we shall in time break the back of the parties to the right of us. The Bolsheviks trust to the miracles

of faith, or to poetry — they speak finely like this young gentleman, meanwhile allowing their army to die of dry rot: they remove the death-penalty; they remove all officers. I don't say their army isn't brave! It's so eager that it fires off all its shells before the Czechs are within striking distance — and then has to run. But, at last, Trotsky and his staff recognize the point of weakness in their army: now they are looking about for men with officers' training. They have found me for one man; to-morrow I go down to the Kazan front for them.

ALEXIS

In the service of the Fatherland?

CARL MARDINBURG

It may ultimately serve the Socialist Austria that is to be after the war!

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

The American and the Austrian seem to answer the question about Bolshevik discipline as they ask it. The disciplined Americans and Germans are determined, first of all, to get something done. The Bolsheviks are not much concerned to get something done as to decide what shall be done. They are less concerned, yes I am sure they are less concerned — how efficient an army they have, than what they have an army for. Discipline consists first of a body of rules and customs, and, second, of the enforcement of these. The Bolshevik accepts this definition. But, first, he insists that the rules and

customs agree with the principles of the Bolshevik Brotherhood, and second, that they be observed in the Bolshevik spirit. The spirit of Bolshevik discipline is the development, expression, and government of self: it is self-discipline. It is the act of those who know their own will. Autocratic or democratic armies may conquer the whole world, and yet have no purpose of their own, accepting discipline for its own sake.

CARL MARDINBURG

Whatever its discipline, the Red Army lost Samara, Simbirsk, and Kazan.

BURTSEV, THE WAITER

*(Stands between CHASTLEEVY and JUDGE SEMYONOV. Has been intent on the conversation; his head hanging out over his body.)* The Red Army will march back over Kazan, Simbirsk and Samara. It is becoming stronger with every day, despite the stories circulated by the Contra-Revolutionaries that the Czechs are only, now a hundred, now fifty versts from Nishni. Batteries are beginning to arrive from the factories; the Petrograd, Moscow, and Smolensk workmen delegations are already at the front! *(Shrieking whistles are heard below on the river. One boat after another takes up the long-drawn-out, blood-curdling cry.)* There go our army boats now to the front; with more contingents, probably! These workmen make for us something we can be proud of — an army of the Proletariat. We conscript from our own ranks, in our own interest!

This Red Army of ours is new; it has hardly had the time to make for itself those new rules and customs of which the Teacher speaks, but, never fear; we discipline ourselves, we shall find what rules we need.

**PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN**

The people will go on looking for their self-government till eternity, and, meanwhile, their rules and customs are violence, insolent bullying, and the "red claw"! Indeed, the silly people hold the scepter; right is their own caprice; they who should feel the rod now thrash their betters with it, hit or miss. Their dictators, insolent jackanapes, meet in secret cabinet, and tell off to die somewhere in the dark, the brave men who provoke their resentment, not even allowing them the honor of riding publicly to their gallows in a tumbril!

**ALEXIS**

Three-quarters of the "violence" and the "red claw" is the product of your own jolly imagination, Pasha! Many Bolsheviks who were down and are now up, demand some sacrifice to their vengeance. Many make the power of office a brutal tyranny. Many, with more eagerness than good sense, plunge headlong into random suspicion and hatred of bourgeois men and women, and refuse to reckon them fellow-citizens, candidates for the Proletariat on trial. Of these false or over-eager ones, we who hate bloodshed that is not honest, are ashamed. But it is few that are bloody! I have seen the face

## 270 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

of the president of one committee against counter-revolution; I looked into it to discover what the face of an executioner might be like; but what I saw in the face was a soft heart, a very soft heart!

It is too much to expect that a clean-sweeping revolution should be without hurt or pain—as harmless as acting on a New Year's resolution! But in the future we may look for cooler judgment among the Bolsheviks; there will come their rules and customs; already one may see them acquiring habits: the Soviet system is getting its feet! The strong leaders are restraining the impulsive ones. There must be no Terror! Those revolting deliberate cruelties which are found in all parts of the world touched by the scourge of this war, must cease here; they give our panting enemies the material they want for creating a "Russian Terror."

### CARL MARDINBURG

Youngster, you find order in disorder, judgment in children, rules in anarchy!

### ALEXIS

It's of no use to argue! You refuse to see how good can come out of boisterous, dramatic, young Humanity, as, stung by the bitter lessons of the war, it renews the struggle to know truth, and makes a right-about-face turn to get upon another road. To me, it is remarkable that at crucial periods, when masses of men feel and act upon the strength of quick collective thought, new forms and new leaders

rise ready to hand, as if nature herself has prepared for the emergency! I never read the story of the French people in their revolutionary crisis without fresh wonder, and every day is renewed my wonder at the spontaneous governments which have arisen in communist Russia. In each village was born a republic overnight. At first each local Soviet is like a monarch, sovereign in its own realm; all things seem to be in confusion. Your gentleman who thinks only in terms of large conglomerations of humanity, who derives satisfaction in having people lumped and tagged and centralized under a crown or a constitution, is quite put out by such a complex of autonomies as Russia presents to-day.

#### CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

These centrifugal tendencies of Bolshevism are pure Russian. The Russian is an individualist. Our German, and our American, friend here find much to condemn in Bolshevism. Much of this they condemn is Russian character. We Russians were never intended for empire. We love our local liberties. Like the ancient Greeks, we should be content with city states. And the Bolsheviks really feel a respect for the insubordination of small units. When I was in Kazan a few weeks ago, I saw several Tartar regiments, and in the course of business I met a Tartar commissar. Perhaps it should have hurt my pride to see this downtrodden race, up-standing! My pride was touched; but only for them, not against them!

**MAN FROM THE CROWD BESIDE THE VERANDA**

Ha! the Tartars have Kazan by the throat! It's only by means of Tartar mercenaries that the Jewish commissars keep control of the city. The Tartars have forced the commissars to remove the Russian Cross from the top of the tower built in the Kazan Kremlin to commemorate the Russian conquest of the Tartars in the sixteenth century, and to put in its place the Moslem Crescent!

**A TARTAR**

Why shouldn't we have some rights! We're a good third of the city of Kazan.

**A JEW**

Yes, why shouldn't we subjugated races have some rights! Give to us a chance, and we will prove ourselves to be but the better servants to our Russian over-lords!

**MAN FROM THE CROWD**

Give you Jews a chance, servile swine, you'd soon have all the rest of us your debtors!

**PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN**

Wait till after the Bolsheviks go! and you'll see the most thorough pogrom Russia ever knew.

**CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST**

For shame! For shame, Pasha!

**THE JEW**

Man of hate! a pink rag rouses the bull in you.

You believe in nothing but flesh and bones; flesh and bones, classified, perfumed and painted. Sweating flesh, flesh not well-tailored — Jewish, or Tartar, or Armenian flesh, you turn up your nose at!

**CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST**

You're well hit, Pasha! It is a hopeful thing about these Bolsheviks that they intend giving the poor despised races a share in the government. In this I believe the Bolsheviks are quite Russian. They are not stingy with their liberties; as were, for example, the Hungarians, with what Kossuth won for them.

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

The Bolsheviks are generous enough, God knows! They are parcelling out the country to the menial classes here and there, leaving Russia's patriots a long task later to recover them. Praise your Greek city states, if you will, but, at the same time, recall, will you please, your history a little further on, to wise Alexander! The Bolsheviks not only have allowed Finland, the Baltic Provinces, the Ukraine, and Crimea, to break away; their own territory is in a hundred pieces, which they can't even keep all Bolshevik; there is no central control!

**MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH**

But there will come central control! That like the new discipline — its rules and customs — will come as Bolshevik institutions settle. For a parallel of decentralization, I would refer you, Mr. America, to your own history. For several years after your

freedom from the mother country was won, there continued such a struggle of leaders, and parties, and states, that we find on record how gravely the founders of your nation despaired of arriving at any national unity. And further was it not over the right of states to secede that your Civil War, the most bloody war in modern times till this, was fought?

**FRANK PLAISTEAD**

You Russians know American history damn well! But some of you put on it absurd interpretations. You refuse to see it as a record of adventures in just government; just but sane. We have never danced the reel of extravagant radicalisms; at least, where innovations have been thrust upon us by intermittent demogogy, they have been checked by courts, subsequent legislation, or disuse. All the same, we have our ideals, as our outstanding leaders have from time to time conceived and framed them. We are not to be judged by the grasping, visionless politicians that as often as not represent us. Judge us by our best, by those who impersonate our durable and traditional hardheadedness and idealism; just at present, by Woodrow Wilson. In him you find your disciplinarian with a vision; your humanitarian with a sense of graded values. I didn't vote for him; I'm a Republican; but that's neither here nor there! Will you be fair enough to accept him, as I do, as our present spokesman?

## MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Wilson is a writer and an educator; he is the first intellectual, strictly speaking, in your presidential succession; an intellectual of sterner stuff than our Russian type generally is, and all the more intractable in such errors of the intellectual as he may run to. He has a well-considered, a well-seasoned, his very own conception of democracy, neither more nor less. He sincerely wishes to see this conception of democracy sway the world's convocation for peace. And for installing his ideas of national rights, he has in mind very definite changes to be made, especially on the part of his enemies.

Wilson champions the cause of a league of democratic nations. But does he acknowledge that, fundamentally, the league must be a federation of the workmen of the world? Does he appreciate the fact that before the war the workmen were the sole internationalists, and already had an "international" after their own fashion? Or does Wilson seek merely to improve the care with which the big brothers watch over the little ones, the big brothers being the right-minded brothers of the right-minded nations; the brotherhood being exercised, for the brothers, not through them.

## CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST

Just as Kerensky, so you tell me, would have Bolshevism come for the people, but not through them!

## FRANK PLAISTEAD

You are clever, Professor! You are a regular Bolshevik! Your suspicions and prejudices will not permit you to see things as they are. You think that all the while Wilson speaks eloquently he has something up his sleeve! You see only his mailed fist, you do not see the genuine humanity of the man. You say we Americans do not mean what we said when we came into the war; but the rest of Europe has at last come to see that we are an idealistic people; that we are not everlasting with an eye to the almighty dollar. Whatever Europe may think, we are in an enviable position. We not only have ideals; we have the power to enforce them; we hold the key to the world situation. We have become the richest and the strongest nation; our allies will reckon with us, the enemy leaders already refer to us, as such. This being so, we shan't have to shout ourselves hoarse to be heard at the peace conference. We have not gone about, and into war, without knowing what we were doing: we are a practical people. Our industry, our whole population — all classes — is united and organized to win this war!

## CARL MARDINBURG

You mean your grand bourgeoisie is united!

## FRANK PLAISTEAD

Don't tell me what I mean! and don't use the word "bourgeois," or any derivative thereof, in referring to America! I said all classes. The American Federation of Labor, surely representative of

our working classes, is working solidly behind the war administration. We shall attend to our internal problems after the war: we attend to one thing at a time. If you Russians had waited till after the war before attempting to clean your own house, you would not now be bereft of the world's sympathy. As it is, you have no honor among the nations, you have gained internal famine and disorder, you contribute Bolshevism and so but add to the dangers already facing the brave men who fight for justice among the nations.

Moreover, you will find you have prejudiced good radicalism, setting back the rational progress of Socialism in Europe a hundred years. Mr. Professor, you and Alexis have been straining facts and your own good sense here to-night, to make out a case for Bolshevism; but surely this is because you do not understand the drift of your theories. I have listened patiently, trying to see if there mightn't be after all something in a movement that undoubtedly has the support of some good men, idealists or intellectuals. You ridicule the Russian intellectual; I agree he is a pitifully inconsequential fellow; well, what are the Bolshevik leaders themselves if not intellectuals merely; stupid, impractical and unbalanced, a millstone around the neck of the true Russian people. Personally these men may be irreproachable, even delightful.

Do not think I do not respect you, Professor — in fact, I think I would admire you if you cast your lot with the lower classes; I believe your sympathy

with them is genuine enough: we all hereafter must face more squarely the problems of the poor; we must do away with poverty. But I feel you only theorize, Professor; you are not in truth a Bolshevik. If you are, it matters little; you will be able to repent soon, before you have compromised yourself: for the ogre of Bolshevism hurries off the scene as quickly as it came on; it is only evanescent! You Bolshevik-minded folks only talk in thin air. If, when I get home, I think over this discussion, it will seem like the stuff of dreams, as insubstantial as the smoke of our cigarettes; and I shall have to pinch myself to realize that I have been conversing here with live men!

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Perhaps you have not been "conversing" with us. Perhaps your mind has been turning nothing over as we talked; at any rate, it did not meet ours! Perhaps it was your mind you should have pinched as you sat here. Men are alive, are real, to you, perhaps, only when they move, physically!

Perhaps physical polity is all you see in the state! You boast of the richest and most powerful nation; rich in material things, strong in the equipment of war. Indeed you Americans are at the top, at the pinnacle of capitalism. Your capitalists shout "democracy" with the loudest: as much money can be made in a democracy as under some other kind of government. Your leaders will not compromise with the German System to-day. To-morrow will

they compromise with the American System; will they allow it to remain the powerful autocracy it is; will they curb your own cotton, coal, and iron kings; will they stay the imperial expansion of your own materialism? Will they admit where their real wealth and power lie? Or will they continue to think of the producers of your wealth as only one part of it, as something to enter in the table of statistics with the other resources, as problems of poverty? Indeed, men like you, Mr. America, declare your concern for labor; you talk about welfare committees and labor policy boards: for you know The System stands on labor; you know that all the wealth, all the power, you boast of, is in your putty feet; tons of human energy there; nothing unreal, nothing thin, there! After not many years, you'll not have to pinch yourselves to realize how live it is, either!

You have given Bolshevism a challenge! You will make it evanescent by saying it is so. It is a blow in your face; if successful, it would suck out all matter for your pride: and so you deny it; it cannot be, it is not strong; you call it names; you delineate its horrors; your leaders summon the nations of the world to protest its terrorism in Russia. Terrorism? That which it suits you to call "terrorism" is created, in part, by your own swift falling upon our land and population; in part, by the exaggeration and misrepresentation of your censored and well-disciplined press; but for the most part it is a delusion, arising out of your own stupefaction at

seeing somewhere the "democracy" which you have so much in your mouths, actualized! We accept the challenge! We scorn your stagy protests! we scorn the insolence of your new-militarists, we scorn the grossness of your riches. For we know how these riches have been piled up by enslaving your masses, your putty feet! We know how you keep them menial, how you develop them into the patriots you need: by playing upon their grosser passions and prejudices, by feeding them with lies from your regimented, bourgeois press, pulpit, and platform!

You come among us boasting of these enlightened and liberty-loving menials, and bringing messages in their name. You come here as we are passing through the glory of free Russia at white heat, and our order is only chaos to you, our words are empty; you listen to our repudiated Bourgeoisie that alone of us all you associate with, for their words sound familiar; but to the birth-cries of big pregnant Russia you stop your ears, as to something obscene. You say we are idle, we do not do things as you. God be praised we don't! Keep to yourself your activities, your huge businesses, your uncanny efficiency. If these things make men blind, if they make men deaf, keep them to yourself; we have native ignorance abounding with us; we do not want machines brought in that will create more.

Finally, you come against us with your armies, and with the cunning little men of Japan; all the capitalisms send a quota for the expedition: the cause interests capitalism everywhere! You bring

us food and — oh! you will do all sorts of things for us, for the Russians whom you would make trustees over the rest of us! To these right Russians you express sorrow that you must come; you say it is necessary as a military measure against your enemies — Germany's reason for trespassing on Belgium. Rot! If to-morrow Germany succumbs, you will nevertheless stay on under some pretext, your high duty to this or that, your mandate to establish right and justice! But we listen no longer to your words! We fight! We are not pacifists. We fight so well you call us Germans. Starvation is one of your weapons. Well, then, we will starve!

There must be freemen in America and in England who feel it a shame to starve brave workmen, and to invade their young republic. These we will have as our friends in your own arsenals, and call them what dirty names you like, they will accomplish more for us and the common cause than you can imagine. You retort that we have our enemies at home in Russia, you will say we are not Russia: we are of the city, the peasants hate us; we are soldiers; we are poor. Indeed there are many Russians who hate us; we have been too uncompromising! They hate us as much as you do, and for the same reasons. You thought, at any rate you said, that our enemies were in a majority, and that once your bright banners were planted on our shores, there would flock to them countless thousands. Some have gone over to you for bread, and, are with you the élite, those few who had the money to flee to London or Paris

— they, mind you, are your really denationalized people, in their investments and in their pleasures!

But the Russians who count, you drive to us. You make Bolshevism national, Russian. And why are we less patriotic than your bourgeois fugitives? Do we not love homeland as much as they? Is not Russia holy to us? Are not her broad plains, her busy rivers, her rich language, holy to us? Ah, but we are more than Russian — that is our fault. We fight for more than Russia, you say! It was in the name of the world proletariat we struck down Russian capitalism. Yes, and we are strong from that struggle; we are desperate, too; for we have tasted blood. We have become maddened with fire; by its light we have seen, off not too far in the distance, a better way of living! And this fresh strength of ours, this madness, this vision, is not, as you know only too well, for holy Russia alone, not alone for her broad plains, for her busy rivers, for her mighty populations; rather, it is dedicated to Brother Workmen everywhere. And so from everywhere we expect, we shall have, great increase to our ranks. Ours is the force of a raging fire which cannot be confined. You may stop it once, you may stop it twice; but once engendered, it will not stay quenched. Stamp it out in Russia, and it will flare up at your own feet on another continent!

*(The challenge of MICHAEL SERGEIVITCH strikes the men dumb! It is getting late, and most of the promenaders have already left the park. Over on a back path the BEGGAR'S*

*grandchild can be heard singing the Russian "Marseillaise"; some soldiers in another part of the park have taken up the refrain. CHASTLEEVY and BURTSEV, who, all his other customers having departed, had now taken a seat at the corner table, sing with gusto the last lines.)*

**PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN**

You sing, Chastleevy, like a Bolshevik — with a cracked voice!

**CHASTLEEVY, THE ARTIST**

Never mind, I do sing; that's something besides laughing, which is all you do. You may make fun of the singing of Bolsheviks; I admire them for it; especially, if it is true, as they say, that they sing, victorious or defeated.

**BURTSEV, THE WAITER**

They can sing when defeated, because they know they are going to win in the end; nothing can stop the soldiers of the Proletariat! Cover your Counter-Revolutionary soldiers with medals, increase their pay, fill them with liquor, demonize them with every engine of hell; our fire shall consume their fire! Our comrades are mad, if you like. They fight to finish a work just begun. Workingmen come from the north, workingmen come from the south, as the brave six hundred marched on foot from Marseilles to Paris, car-iraing! They march without trappings, without the brilliant uniforms of officers. No wines or

## 284 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

sweet chocolate in their equipment! Our comfortable officer-enemies seem to have a great deal of the bright, convenient, and satisfying things which we Bolshevik Russians find very attractive; nevertheless they are not going to buy us with the old promises of easier lives, nor with ships of food and money. The liquor they offer us as bribes we will hurl into the gutters, where we emptied our own liquor in those first mad days of the Revolution. No, they are not going to buy us with what they think is all we care for! Nor are they going to deceive us again to take service as Swiss guards for the palaces and royal grounds they live in!

JUDGE SEMYONOV

Burtsev seems to know his French Revolution!

FRANK PLAISTEAD

Probably even he knows American history — oh, you clever Russians!

MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH

Burtsev has explained Bolshevik self-discipline better than I did.

PASHA, THE GENTLEMAN

Discipline! The new Puritanism! The new state of the Naked Truth, sans God, sans law, sans food, sans good clothing, sans all the good things! There will be no more wine, nothing the well-born may drink to distinguish them from the hoi polloi! It will be a drab existence we live, reduced to a bleared level!

## MICHAEL SERGEIVITCH

It will not be Puritanism, nor Syndicalism, nor Socialism, nor Anarchism, nor Libertinism, nor any other sport movement, cult or tendency which you disbelievers can cry out at and smother by derision. It may be level for you: it will perform no jigs, cut no capers, nor afford you any amusement. Doubtless, it will be distressfully level, a vast plain stretching endlessly, where roams every living creature, where grows every green thing, where the rivers are black with happy commerce! It will not be a French Revolution. That was but a symptom, but a sickness that frightened the Bourgeoisie. Of this revolution there will be no Carlyle that will presume to write a history. Historians do not write of Deucalion and Pyrrha: they are an epic subject. With the coming of Bolshevism is an end to the periods of primitive man; the developed man will look back upon the kings and rulers of his youth as at the best only heroes with serious limitations; he will know the ape in his line of ancestry; and he will not be ashamed, neither will he take pride in it. It had to be!

Bolshevism comes in the twentieth century; now we see it only in its infancy — formless, without clear meaning. It will be no lovely thing, and there will be no hypocrites flourishing to make it appear so. It comes as the war itself — unprecedented, of unbelievable proportions, cruel, sucking out more of human energy than ever there seemed to be. But its cruelty will not be, like that of the war, simianesque-burlesque. It will be the cruelty of the irrevocable,

## 286 SKETCHES OF SOVIET RUSSIA

of the “done-for!” Not a punishment for foolishness but its annihilation. If the industrial revolution of a century ago was cruel, this revolution will be murderous. It will displace; without proposition, it will dispose! Many who were first shall be last, and many who were last shall be first! It will not be Utopia, Happiness Unmitigated! It will be a crass thing, out of struggles, bitterness and woe compounded; and the woe of the dreamers of Utopias, of worlds without pain, will be very great! Bolshevism brings not peace but a sharp sword. It is not Pacifism — Pacifism is a step beyond; Bolshevism only clears the way for many such expressions of man’s best spirits, of his high instinct for getting by losing.

For, indeed, after the first freedom, the easiest, the narrow freedom to be as good as any animal in the pack, is obtained, then are just made possible the richer wider freedoms: the freedom to be worked hard by one’s natural interests and so to taste the deliriousness, the misery, of self-forgetfulness; the freedom to sing out one’s heart, by mad song and dance to be saved and healed; and, finally, the freedom of the mind. When by the light of the new realism men see what blind creatures they may be, they will understand that they must be, not reformed, but informed. They will seek to know beauty and truth. They will teach their children to think.

*(The Teacher rises from the table. As he stands looking out over the hill, he observes signs of a brewing storm. The river is turbulent; her boats are*

*chafing at anchor, their moving lights flash. The moon is riding fast from under a heavy black cloud and casting a ghostly light. The trees in the park are lashed by the wind. A strong gust blows a chair from the café veranda into the middle of the path.)* But men do not wait to think! In heavy times they move by passion and instinct. They always will! We Bolsheviks will leave to history our reasons. We do not fear to ack quickly as we must!

**ALEXIS**

The wind bloweth as it listeth!

*(The ex-soldier at the coat-rack helps  
MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH on with his coat.)*

I will walk home with you, Teacher!

*(MICHAIL SERGEIVITCH and ALEXIS shake  
hands all round, and depart together.)*

**CARL MARDINBURG**

The Herr Professor seems to be a thorough Bolshevik. Is he active in the party?

**JUDGE SEMYONOV**

No. Some of the Nishni Bolsheviks wanted to make him commissar of education, but the majority wouldn't listen to it. Could anything show better the absurdity of the Teacher's theories! And he has been most eloquently and most cleverly explaining to us how there would come those from the educated classes into Bolshevism. Ha! he, himself, will come knocking on the door in vain!

## BURTSEV, THE WAITER

*(As he and the ex-soldier-at-the-coat-rack are putting up the shutters of the café and closing it for the night.)* Perhaps he will! But all the fine spirited men like him everywhere will not. For the sake of ten men good and true like him, we Bolsheviks will spare tens of thousands of you scoffers — you with your gratified pride, you who will come to any state but that of humility: who refuse to reckon with the possibility that you may do badly or think badly! Michail Sergeivitch and Alexis, and you, Chastleevy, are humble. You ask nothing from us Bolsheviks. You may get recognition or you may not; it doesn't matter! Men like you are answers to the best arguments they may put up against us. God made you honest hearts; He will make others; and in that we Bolsheviks will try to give Him some assistance!

*(The men at the corner table, the only guests left in the café, take up their hats and file down the café steps. Rain is beginning to fall. A flash of lightning for a moment brightens the whole park and reveals seven figures, coat collars turned up, hurrying along the path, and passing a stiff monument to Count Zolodeen, grandfather of ALEXIS, a brave general in a past war.)*

THE END



THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY  
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

This book is under no circumstances to be  
taken from the Building

JAN 13 1921	JAN 19 1921	JAN 28 1921
JAN 13 1921	JAN 19 1921	JAN 28 1921
JAN 18 1921	JAN 19 1921	JAN 28 1921
JAN 18 1921	JAN 19 1921	JAN 29 1921
JAN 13 1921	JAN 19 1921	JAN 28 1921
JAN 20 1921	JAN 20 1921	JAN 29 1921
JAN 15 1921	JAN 20 1921	JAN 28 1921
JAN 21 1921		
JAN 16 1921		FEB 28 1921
JAN 16 1921	JAN 23 1921	
JAN 16 1921		
17	JAN 22 1921	
	2/2	
	JAN 26 1921	
JAN 18 1921		JAN 13 1921
	27 1921	

2000 000

